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POPULAR Computing WEEKLY

30 August — 5 September 1984

It's the best selling weekly

Vol 3 No 35

Top titles pirated



PORTUGUESE company Microbait Software is copying Spectrum software in large quantities.

Based in Oporto, the company is offering around 54 cassettes for sale in Portugal.

Each contains two different top selling Spectrum titles from a wide variety of software houses. The cassette artwork is faithfully reproduced in full colour and the inlays contain extensive instructions



printed in Portuguese.

Not one of these games has been authorised by their original publishers.

At least eight of the 100 plus titles in Microbait's catalogue come from Quicksilver. Mana-

ging director, Rod Cousens, said: "Portugal seems to be one of the main offenders for this type of organised piracy. It's not the kids copying stuff that worry us so much, as this kind

continued on page 5 ▶

Virgin pushes for quality

VIRGIN Games' plans for the autumn reveal a change of strategy.

The company will launch just six new titles and this autumn

many of its existing games are to be deleted from Virgin's catalogue. Deleted titles include *Owzat* for the BBC, *Sheepwalk* and *Ghost Town* for the Spectrum, and all its Dragon titles.

"The best of our current software will be reduced to £2.99 until the end of November. These are games like *Falcon Patrol* and *Racing Manager*. The deleted titles are our not-so-good products," said managing director Nick Alexander.

"We're cutting the price because we've found that catalogue

continued on page 5 ▶

Computers takeover

CAMPUS, manufacturer of the Lynx micros, which has been in receivership since June, is hoping to exchange contracts with a buyer.

Receivers Hacker Young says that final negotiations are now taking place.

Spicer, the paper manufacturer, is reported to be the buyer.



Melbourne House reveals Holmes' latest case

THE long awaited *Sherlock Holmes* adventure from Melbourne House is now completed and should be available from mid-September.

Like *The Hobbit*, *Sherlock*

Holmes was written by Philip Mitchell in 'English', with complex sentence constructions being understood and with characters leading 'inde-

continued on page 5 ▶

INSIDE } SCRABBLE 64 } ELECTRON PLUS 1 } MUD }



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That a Portuguese company, Microbaite, should be selling unlicensed copies of UK Spectrum titles is not, at first sight, particularly noteworthy in these days of rampant piracy.

But two aspects of the company's activities will be giving cause for concern.

First, it is commercial piracy on a grand scale. Over a hundred top British Spectrum titles are involved including all the big names — *Chequered Flag*, *The Hobbit*, *Jet Pac*, *Manic Miner* and *Scrabble* are all on its list.

Second, this is no underground operation working out of some shady back-street accommodation address. Microbaite is apparently trading quite openly. The games are advertised, they are available in the high-street shops with four-colour window display stickers — the works.

Yet there is very little that the British software houses can do to stop it.

International copyright law is a funny thing. Even though Portugal is a signatory of the Berne Convention and the Universal Copyright Convention, halting Microbaite would be a lengthy and above all costly process. Bringing legal actions in foreign countries and then enforcing them is very difficult and time consuming.

So what can the UK houses do. Do they write off Portugal as a lost cause? Do they now add Portugal to an increasing list of such countries where there is no hope of controlling blatant software piracy?

Unfortunately, the answer is almost certainly yes on both counts.

British software is the best in the world, and it is being openly ripped-off.

What Microbaite is doing is a crime. An even bigger crime is that Microbaite seems likely to get away with it.

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ABC
56,052 copies sold every week
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POPULAR Computing WEEKLY

Vol 3 No 35

> Presents...

News > *Sherlock Holmes* > Cheetah's cordless joystick

Star game > Laser warfare on the 16K Spectrum, with *Astrocrash*

Street Life > Mud, Mud, glorious Mud — Christina Erskine meets Multi-User Dungeon wizard Richard Bartle

Hardware review > MRM's disc filing system for the BBC B > and the Plus-1 expansion for the Electron

Software reviews > Activision's *Pitfall* has arrived in the UK > Electron games from Romik

Spectrum > Keep a track of your characters in machine code programs

The QL Page > Andrew Pennell tries his hand at multi-tasking with a *Trace* facility

Dragon > Wayne Smithson helps you cut down loading problems

BBC & Electron > Watch shooting stars with the aid of Alex Treacher's prediction and calculation program

Commodore 64 > Continuing Adrian Warman's on-screen menu facility

Best of the rest > Letters 7 > Open Forum 38 > Microradio 38 > Arcade Avenue 39 > Baud Walk 40 > Adventure Corner 43 > Peek and Poke 45 > Diary 51 > New Releases 52 > Top Ten, This Week 54 > Ziggurat, Puzzle, Hackers 55

> Futures...

Race to the finish with *Turbo Track*, Star Game for the C64... Street Life talks to commercial computer graphics house Communications Studios... a sophisticated graphic designer program for the BBC... and UDGs on QL.

5
10



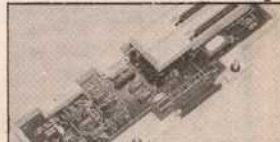
12

14

17

21

23



25

31

34

How to submit articles Articles which are submitted for publication should not be more than 2000 words long. The articles, and any accompanying programs, should be original. It is breaking the law of copyright to copy programs out of other magazines and submit them here — so please do not be tempted. **Accuracy** *Popular Computing Weekly* cannot accept any responsibility for any errors in programs we publish, although we will always try our best to make sure programs work.

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September

Monday 3rd. Noon

--Grand Opening-- by A TRIBE OF TOPO ROBOTS, (as seen on TV), supplied by **PRISM**.

Tuesday 4th & Wednesday 5th

Demonstration of BBC, including Z80 and 6502 second processors — Torch disc pack — Teletex adaptor — Digitiser — Gemini Datagem Database and Integrated business software.

Thursday 6th, Friday 7th & Saturday 8th

Demonstration of Memotech MTX, FDX disc drives, Solidisc, the incredible HRX graphics display using hard discs — RS128 — 128k version of MTX

Monday 10th & Tuesday 11th

Commodore presentation — 64 MODEM AND COMPUNET — 1541 Express Loader — Printers and Monitor — SX64 Portable AND sneak preview of PLUS 4 and Commodore 16!!!

Thursday 13th, Friday 14th & Saturday 15th

PRISM will demonstrate the Sinclair QL and the Enterprise computers — also Spectrum and BBC modems and Wren Portable Computer.

Throughout the exhibitions there will be a continuous display of **MICROVITEC** colour monitors for Sinclair QL...Spectrum...BBC and Commodore 64.

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Memotech RS128 (RS232 + 128K).....	£399.00	—, —
Smith Corona TP1, D/Wheel- Serial	£199.95	—, —
80 col Dot Matrix-80 CPS.....	£199.95	—, —
Fuller FDS Keyboards.....	£44.95	—, —

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Piracy

◀ continued from page 1

of professional outfit."

Melbourne House, with *The Hobbit* and the *Horace* series, Psion and Beau Jolly — several ex-Imagine titles are on the list — have also been Microbait's major targets.

Peter Norman, Psion's product director, said, "We will pursue this extremely vigorously. We always go to great lengths to stamp out professional piracy."

Programs in Microbait's catalogue include: *Chuckie Egg* from A&F; *Football Manager* (Addictive Games); *Invasion Force*, *Voice Chess* (Artic); *Pimania* (Automata); *Zip Zap*, *Arcadia*, *Zzoom* (Beau Jolly); *Manic Miner* (Bug Byte); *Dallas* (CCS); *Pool* (CDS); *Gulpmen* (Campbell Systems); *Black Crystal* (Carnell); *Halls of the Things* (Crystal); *Jungle Trouble*, *Harrier Attack* (Durell); *Dictator*, *Embassy Assault* (DKTronics); *Violent Universe*, *The Pyramid*, *Black Hole* (Fantasy); *Heathrow Air Traffic Control*, *3D Space Wars* (Hewson); *Bugaboo* (Indescomp); *Mad Martha* (Mikro); *Hungry Horace*, *Horace Goes Skiing*, *Horace and the Spiders*, *Pterodactyls*, *Penetrator*, *The Hobbit* (Melbourne House); *3D Tunnel* (New Generation); *Kong* (Ocean); *Invasors*, *Planetoids*, *Chequered Flag*, *Scrabble* (Psion); *Smugglers Cove*, *Aquaplane*, *The Chess Player*, *Xxodon*, *Trader*, *Galaxians*, *Games Designer* (Quicksilver); *Navigators*, *Everest Ascent* (Richard Shepherd); *Star Trek*, *Slippery Sid*, *Cyber Rats* (Silversoft); *Joust* (Softtek); *Cruisin*, *Blind Alley* (Sunshine); *Transam*, *Cookie*, *Jet Pac* (Ultimate).

Virgin

◀ continued from page 1

game sales have now all but stopped — this is a way of repromoting the titles."

The six titles Virgin will release this autumn reflect the company's new policy of selective publishing.

"We are now going for quality rather than quantity," Nick continued. "But we are still going to market the titles extremely hard, and will spend £0.25m in advertising the games in the run-up to Christmas."

The new titles are *Falcon Patrol II*, *Terrorist* — written by Andromeda Software — and *Sorcery*, all for the Commodore 64, *Strangeloop* and *The Biz* for the Spectrum and *Sinbad* for the BBC B. *Sorcery* is adapted from the Spectrum version of the

Cheetah releases Rat

THE first cordless joystick has been launched by Cheetah Marketing. Available first for the Spectrum, versions for other machines are also planned.



The Remote Action Transmitter (RAT) works on much the same principle as a remote control TV unit. It has a touch

sensitive control pad and fire button. When pressed, these send out the relevant infra-red signals to a receiver which plugs directly into the edge connector at the back of the Spectrum.

The RAT can be used effectively up to thirty feet away from the screen, and the signals are sent out at a wide angle — about 30 degrees — so the player need not point the 'joystick' directly at the receiver.

The RAT is compatible with many top software titles including *Psytron*, *Trashman*, *Atic Atac*, *Sabre Wulf* and *Hunchback*.

The RAT should be available within the next week or so, and costs £29.95. The PP3 battery needed for the unit is not included in the pack.

Aquarius price falls

THE price of the Aquarius 1 micro has been cut by manufacturer Radofin Electronics to £49.95.

The drop means that the Aquarius 1 is now effectively

Radofin's sales director Mike Quelch



Rabbit creditors take action

RABBIT creditors are taking legal action to stop Stuart Edgar from continuing to act as liquidator of the company.

Stuart Edgar was appointed as liquidator by Rabbit shareholders after the company's creditors put forward no alternative at the creditors meeting on August 10th.

Now they have filed a petition to the courts objecting to Edgar's appointment.

However, because the courts are now in recess, the petition will not be heard until October.



Strangeloop for Spectrum

game, *Sinbad* has the Arabian Nights as its theme and *The Biz* is a simulation game based on the life of a rock star.

Virgin will continue this selective policy into 1985. "In the long term, Virgin will be releasing fewer games than in the past; at the most, it'll be two per month," confirmed Nick Alexander.

Sherlock

continued from page 1

pendent lives.

As with *The Hobbit*, a knowledge of the literature is useful although not essential to the playing of the game.

The faithful Dr Watson is, of course, an integral part of the adventure and Inspector Lestrade of Scotland Yard also appears.

The player takes on the persona of Holmes and the game begins at his rooms at 221b, Baker Street. Successful completion of the adventure depends on solving a particularly difficult case that has Lestrade of the Yard completely baffled.

The adventure takes place in 'real time', and the locations are scattered over Victorian England. The number of locations and the complexity of the sentence interpretation routines have meant that the graphics in the game have had to be kept simple.

Sherlock Holmes for the Spectrum will cost £14.95. A Commodore 64 version is due for release in October.

competing with the ZX81 in the starter computer market. However, unlike the ZX81, the Aquarius offers 16 colours and 40 x 24 character graphics resolution. Software is available on both cassette and cartridge.

Radofin has also recently appointed Mike Quelch as sales director. Mike was formerly software sales manager at Dragon Data.

Domark's marathon quest

A PRIZE of £25,000 is being offered to the first person who can complete *Eureka*, an adventure-arcade program from a new company, Domark.

The game has been programmed by the Hungarian team from Andromeda, and consists of five separate adventures linked by five arcade games. The arcade screens must be successfully completed for the player to move from one adventure to the next.

Domark was formed last March by two ex-advertising account managers, Mark Strachan and Dominic Wheatley. The latter is the grandson of author Dennis Wheatley. The

pair originated the ideas for *Eureka*, and commissioned the Games Workshop founder and author of Puffin's *Fighting Fantasy* series, Ian Livingstone, to plan the structure of the adventure.

While Domark expects the prize to be claimed eventually, the company believes it will take six to nine months for anyone to finish it.

Eureka will be launched at the *Personal Computer World Show*. Available by mail-order only from November, it will cost £14.95.

Spectrum and Commodore versions only are planned at the moment.

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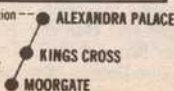
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Alternative: Piccadilly Line (from Heathrow etc) to Finsbury Park or Wood Green — Link with W3 bus service to the fair.

Just too expensive

I am writing on the subject of your editorial in the August 16 issue.

If the home computer market is suffering from disenchantment it has nothing to do with any lack of intelligent software.

There is only one reason for the depression and that is the price of computer software. For a person such as myself, like a great many of my friends, good quality arcade or adventure games are just too expensive for our allowance of pocket money. This means that when one of us buys a game it is copied and passed around; a process which I am sure is taking place all over the country. The result is that the software houses lose out.

Can you really imagine the many thousands of "trigger-happy" arcade freaks buying documentaries or biographies for their micro? The idea is totally ludicrous.

Scott Murdoch
9 Kinnaird Drive
Linwood
Renfrewshire
Scotland PA3 3RL

Microdrive utility

I read with great interest the microdrive utilities published this week on your 'QL' page. I too have developed a similar program and would like to make a couple of observations which may save potential users many hours of fruitless bug-hunting:

1) It is impossible to call Merge (or DLine for that matter) from procedures on machines with the later issue Roms — mine is 'AH'. Attempting to do so results in the 'Not Implemented' message. The only ways around this are either to exit from the program via a Stop after the Proc/Fn cleared message has appeared or by the intelligent use of simple Basic.

2) The routines as listed start at line number 30000. This is inadvisable as it renders the Auto command useless, whilst developing start at line '1' cures this problem.

Finally, try including the following routine which comple-

tely wipes the screen — very useful when experimenting with different window sizes:

```
150 DEF PROCEDURE reset
160 OPEN #15,SCR—
512,256,0,0:PAPER#15,1:INK
#15,1:CLS#15:CLOSE#15
170 END Define
```

To call this routine from SuperBasic simply enter Reset.
John Lawlor
35 Stonefield Drive
Inverurie
Aberdeenshire
Scotland

Existing text

Could I ask for help from one of your computer wizards out there?

After patiently typing in the recently published Word Processor program by Simon Wallace for the Commodore 64, I could not get it to input new text — although it appeared to allow for amendments to existing text.

Did anyone else have the same problem or can anyone explain what I am doing wrong?

P B Nash
7 Tewkesbury Close
Cheadle Hulme
Cheshire SK8 7QQ

A fab review

In the Ziggurat column in your issue dated June 21, Boris Allan considered the subject of magazine reviews of computer books, and with a style of review that he referred to as the 'Fab review'.

The article said that Boris took 'a random sample' of such reviews, and presents quota-



"Stand by to board! She's carrying British software!"

tions from this sample. I'm rather perplexed that all four quotations are from the same issue of *Personal Computer News*, and furthermore, that they're drawn from reviews of only two books written by my good self.

I'd be the last person to suggest that Boris was suggesting that my reviews are superficial and inadequate, and I just can't believe his article had anything to do with my not totally favourable review of his QL book in PCN issue 60. I wouldn't even like to think he has a warped sense of humour, but perhaps you could draw to his attention the fact that his random number generator appears to be broken...

John Lettice (Features Editor)
Personal Computer News
62 Oxford Street
London W1A 2HG

Health and fitness

I would like to know the purpose of advertising a book on Break Dancing in your classified ads section. Is this an attempt to bring health and fitness to all us pale-faced, overweight computer junkies?

David Hawkins
107 Butts Hill Road
Woodley
Reading
Berks

Search me

Extra income

I have an excellent idea to solve the problem of saving your favourite games on to ZX Microdrive.

The problem arises when software companies use machine code to load parts of programs to stop software pirates from making a profit. Tape copiers cannot change the machine code and therefore cannot copy the more complicated programs.

The solution is simple: customers with the tape version of the program simply send off the cassette inlay, as proof of purchase, along with their Microdrive cartridge to the software company which would, for a small fee, copy the pro-

gram on to microdrive and, to prevent further copies being made, mark the cassette inlay.

This would be a very good idea as the buyer profits, by having a fast loading game, and the software company also has a source of extra income.

R J Cockshott
48 Mercury Close
Lordshill
Southampton

Did he understand?

I would like to reply to comments made by W. A. George in the August 16 issue.

He says he wishes I had been "more lucid". Does this mean he did not understand the article (QL Page, August 2)? Or is it that he was upset because the features and concepts would not cram into his ZX81?

I quite clearly stated that many Basic dialects could not support such concepts because they did not have local variables and procedures and functions which could be called recursively.

Alan Turnball
Stockport
Cheshire

Increased piracy

In reply to Chris Sawford, I feel that I must make the following points. Firstly, making their routines available to the general public is exactly what most programmers want to avoid, as they may have put a lot of time and effort into them. Making them generally available might eventually put them out of a job, with others being able to write similar programs.

Secondly, making the program easy to copy also increases piracy and therefore reduces sales, another thing the programmer wants to avoid. Thinking that there is nothing wrong with copying software if you don't sell it is absurd, and people must realise that this is crippling the industry as much as organised piracy.

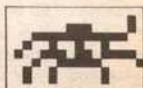
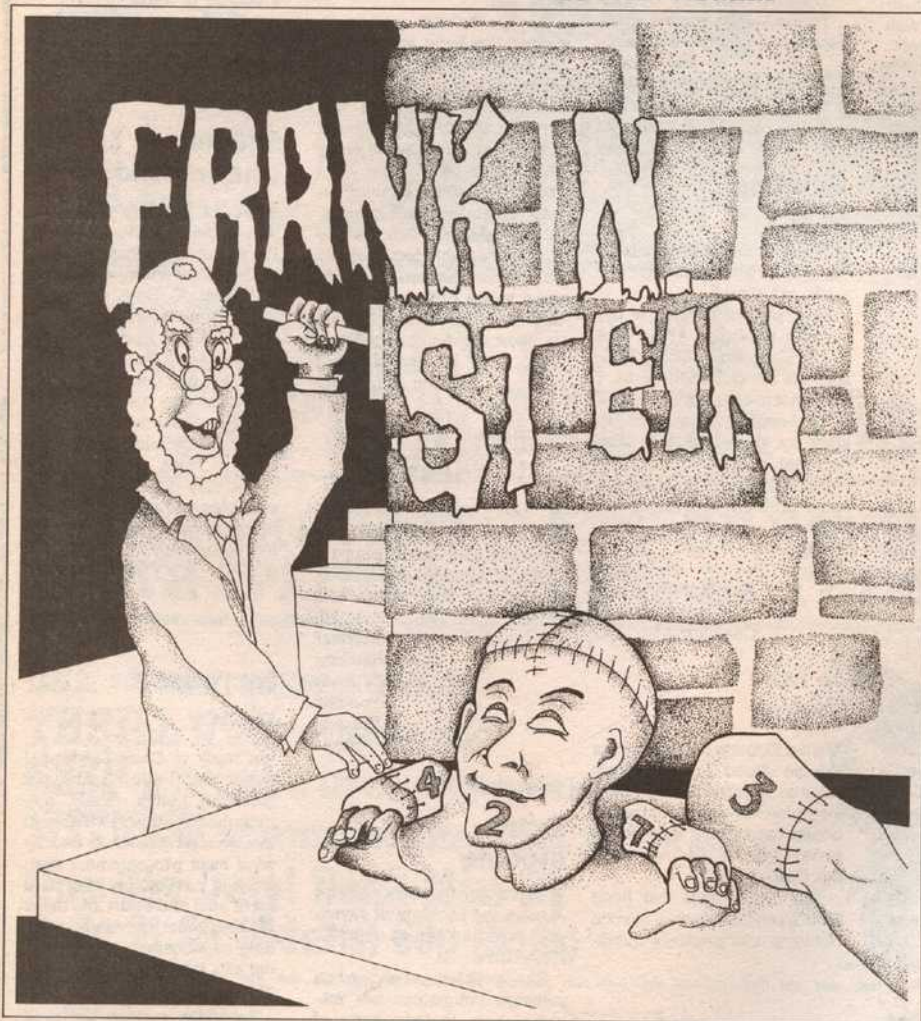
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RICHARD SHEPHERD SOFTWARE

Astrocrash

Destroy all the meteors with your laser but avoid the red ones in Kevin Ridley's game for 16K Spectrum

Astrocrash is an *Asteroids*-type game written in Basic for the 16K Spectrum. The subroutine starting at line 800 in the listing explains how the game is played. Basically, the player has to destroy 50 meteors with his spaceship's laser to win. If his ship crashes into a meteor five times or his power runs out, he loses. The meteors are not destroyed by crashing into the ship, so one meteor can have several crashes. Since some meteors (the red ones) home-in on the ship, it is therefore necessary to race away from them to gain room to manoeuvre. Manoeuvring consists of rotating either clockwise or anticlockwise or moving forward.

Notes

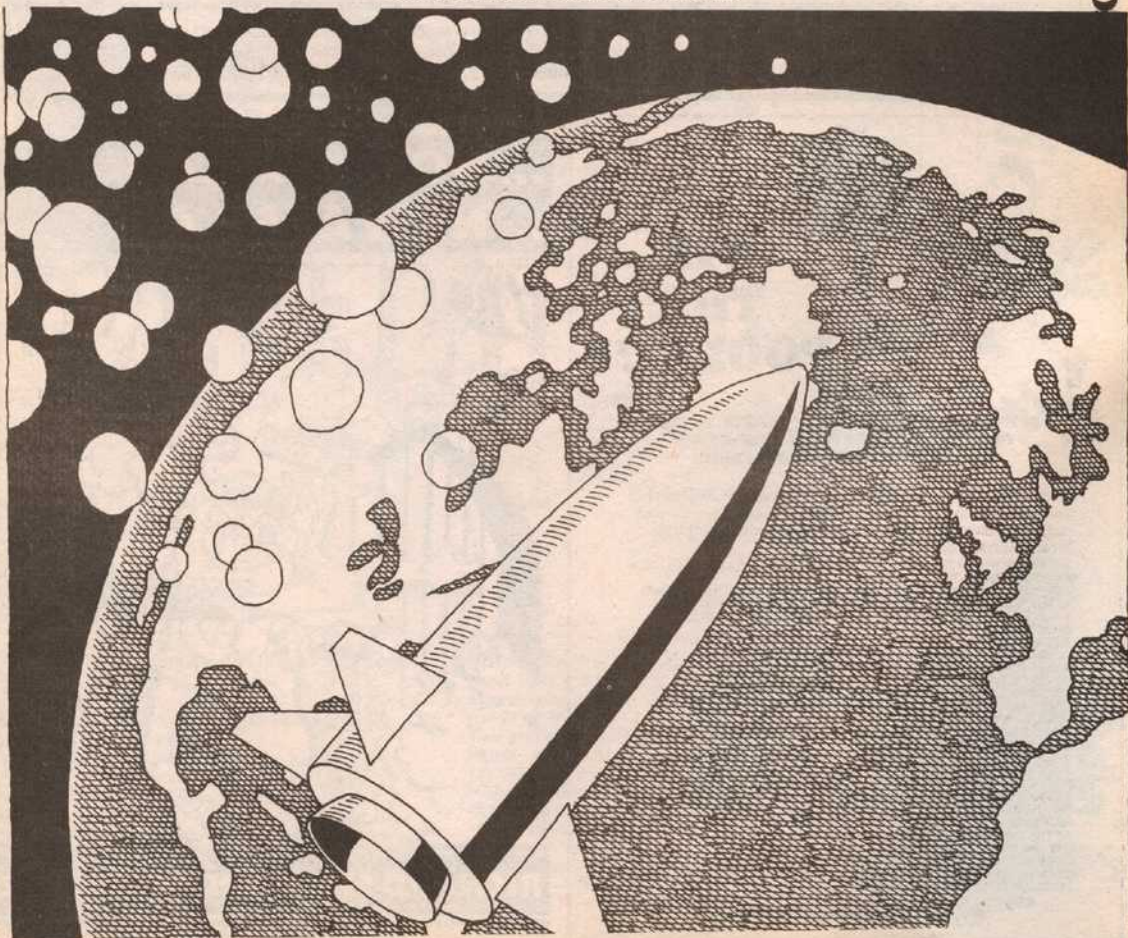
The game is controlled by means of the subroutine calls at the beginning of the program.

The rocket rotation is achieved by having four user-defined graphics characters (A-D), each showing the rocket pointing in a different direction. The variable (ch) representing the ASCII code of the character is increased or decreased by 1 depending on the key pressed and the new character is then printed.

The number of meteors on the screen (m) increases as the score increases but is never more than three. The line numbers, column numbers, and ink colours of the

meteors are held in three arrays - l(), c(), i(). To move the meteors, the line and column numbers are increased by values held in the array d() (d(1) to d(3) is for lines, d(4) to d(6) for columns). To enable the red meteors to home-in, the signs of the relevant values in d() are always kept such that these meteors move towards the rocket.

The laser effect is achieved by plotting a point (px,py) at the centre of the rocket and drawing a line from that point, using the draw coordinates dx,dy, which are calculated according to the rocket's orientation. This line is shortened if a meteor is hit or if the rocket is near the edge of the screen.



Mud in your eye

Christina Erskine talks to Richard Bartle, creator of MUD, at Essex University

Richard Bartle must be extremely thankful that his A Level grades weren't quite up to scratch. A grade higher, and he would have gone to his first choice of university; Exeter. If he had gone to Exeter, MUD might never have come into being.

As it happened, that one grade short took him to the University of Essex. The rest is probably D & D history...

About 2-3000 people have sampled Richard's creation, the Multi-user Dungeon in Essex's mainframe computer, in the four years that it has been running. Only 44 have managed to reach the ultimate status of

Wizard or Witch.

So far, only members of the university's Computing Society and a few external users with PSS (Packet Switching Service) systems have been able to access the DEC-10 computer where this vast Dungeon and Dragon adventure is stored. Now Century Communications plans to publish MUD commercially so that it is available to the public, sometime next year.

"The idea for MUD's creation began when I met Roy Trubshaw, a fellow student at Essex. He had had a long-term interest in adventures, and wanted to set up a multi-user game. I had been playing D & D games since I was at school, mostly by mail, so I was obviously enthusiastic about the idea.

"Roy wrote and designed the core of the game — it took up most of his third year and ruined his degree. After he'd graduated — just — I took over the game's development."

MUD started as a scenario of about 100 locations — a diversion for the Computing Society. The word spread, however, and demand from external users — mainly American students to start with — made Richard expand to 300. Today's version has about 400 locations.

The game's development took up all of Richard's spare time in his third year — evenings and weekends.

"Having completed my degree course, I wasn't too keen on the look of the outside world, so I took the opportunity of doing a PhD in Artificial Intelligence like a shot. Now I'll be able to stay with MUD indefinitely, because I've been offered a lectureship at Essex."

At one point there were too many external players for the Computing Society's time to cope with. "I went to the university authorities, expecting them to disapprove strongly of giving more time to a 'mere game'. But they were surprisingly understanding, and arranged that we could play at night, when no-one else would be disturbed.

"When MUD 'goes public', it won't be on the university computer — the night hours will be too inconvenient. Either there will be one big computer with the whole lot on it, or lots of smaller ones linked to a larger one. But it should be capable of accepting input from any modem, even the very slow baud ones. And obviously people will be charged, per hour, for playing the game."

The essential aim of MUD is to collect treasure and drop it in the swamp in order to collect points and enhance your status. The treasure may not always be obvious — you may well find some 'dirty old groats' lying around. Giving them to a beggar may earn you goodwill, but washing them and discovering that when clean they're actually quite

valuable is a lot more useful.

Not only are the traditional assortment of villains out to get you — dryads, dwarfs, zombies — but the interaction between players can be amicable or decidedly vicious. Nor are people as they seem — a senior lecturer in the computing department stole my axe three times while masquerading under the title of Bom the Berserker Enchanter!

You can talk to other players — either to help or mislead — and you can 'snoop' on them to find out where they are and what they're carrying.

Richard's title — as befits the game's Lord High Priest — is *Isch Wizard*. His role frequently involves acting as mediator when squabbles between players break out.

"I have to make sure that everything is sorted out amicably, as well. If I offend someone, they could wreak havoc in the game before leaving it. Also, I get a huge number of letters from people interested in learning how to play, wanting hints and so on."

Once you have become a wizard, or witch if you adopted a female persona at the start, you remain one, and can't be toppled from your position. But even without specific goals to aim for, the 44 wizards and witches still play. And you can always adopt a new identity and start the quest all over again — the interaction with different characters means that no game is ever going to be the same.

"People certainly get very wrapped up in it-myself, for one. I've known students stay behind in the holidays to have a go when they aren't going to be thwarted by other players. When we start the commercial version, it'll probably start with about 100 lines open — at the moment, the maximum number at any one time is 36, and only six of those can be external players."

Most novice players end up getting immediately lost in the graveyard, where the tombstones are inscribed with various names. Richard has commemorated all the wizards and witches on the stones — and some others as well. Roy Trubshaw has his own headstone, Brian Roberts, who wrote a chunk of the original game, is remembered, as is Nigel Roberts who extensively tested the game before it was launched to an unsuspecting computing society.

My personal favourite is the tomb dedicated to Murrell's Balloon Emporium.

"A friend of mine and Roy's tried to set up his own multi-user game, called *PIG*, because he said it was a *PIG* to write. But he never had time to finish it, and when he gave it up, his major location was Murrell's Balloon Emporium." Well, it beats radio dedications.

After an afternoon with MUD, I'll admit to being hooked. All I can say to anyone who doesn't have a modem/can't wait for Century to make it available, is, get those UCCA forms off to Essex.



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The computer game is DEAD...

Big brother

Hardware Plus 1 Expansion Unit
Micro Acorn Electron Price £59.90
Supplier Acorn Computers, 4a
Market Hill, Cambridge.

When I first bought my Electron I was obviously aware that it wasn't quite the same as its big brother the BBC, but took solace in the fact that it was a lot cheaper and that an interface providing a printer port would be coming soon.

My hopes were well founded — it didn't take long to come and at £56.90 it now gives me very nearly a 'big brother' for about £255 as opposed to £399.

To me the Plus 1 unit is very good value for money. It allows my Electron to at last

use a printer, joysticks and, eventually, Rom cartridges.

The analogue interface not only provides the facility for joysticks but virtually, in theory, allows the Electron to be used in control applications. Any electrical sensor apparatus could, in principle, be coupled up. The interface measures electric currents and converts them to a numeric form.

However, being an analogue port does mean that any game requiring a joystick will need analogue units to be connected. Most of the other interfaces on the market so far for the Electron have used switched joysticks. Whilst Acornsoft games needing joysticks will no doubt be compatible with the Plus 1, other software houses who already produce titles compatible with the switchable type may need some encouragement to make their programs compatible.

Having said that, I have found it very

strange moving from key controlled games to joystick control. Whilst my fingers have learned to locate accurately the required keys, my hand has yet to develop the reflexes necessary for the joystick.

For me the most important facility the Plus 1 offers is the Centronics-compatible parallel interface which allows me at long last to couple up to a printer. It's only really when you haven't got a printer that you realise its true value.

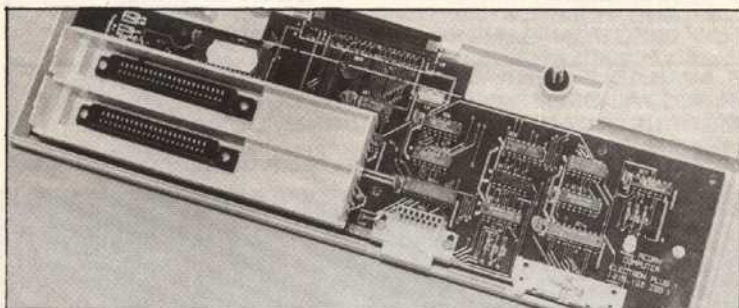
Not only that but I found the Plus 1 manual far easier to follow than the manuals I have read which accompany printers — the Plus 1 manual lists all the previously unlisted *FX calls that are needed when using a printer.

Rather curiously, the Plus 1 also has two Rom cartridge ports. Where do I get a Rom cartridge to try? To date it would appear that there aren't any to be had. The BBC B also has a cartridge facility, though again there are no cartridges to use with it. All very strange.

This is a pity because Rom cartridges allow for virtually instant loading of games programs, etc, by merely plugging them in. No more time wasting with cassettes. It could also allow other computer languages to be used provided in the form of plug-in Roms. Not only is the Plus 1 very good value for money, but at last it provides the kind of facilities before only available to BBC owners.

The Plus 1 is a very neatly designed and powerful extension.

Fred Short



Extra Ram

Hardware E00 Disk Filing System
Micro BBC B Price £24.95 Supplier
MRM Software, 17 Cross Coates
Road, Grimsby, South Humberside,
DN34 4QH.

One of the problems with Acorn's own disc filing system (DFS) is that it uses up some of the RAM (2.75K) that is usually available for programs.

MRM Software have produced a DFS that does not use up any of the available RAM. Unlike Acorn's DFS, which comes on a single chip, the MRM DFS comprises three chips, and is mounted on a two inch square board.

When trying the MRM DFS with a large number of commercially produced programs, it performed well and no problems were found; however, in order to avoid using the RAM on the computer, some sacrifices have been made. The most notable is that only four files can be open at the same time, whereas the Acorn DFS allows up to five.

The MRM DFS is intended for anyone who already has a DFS in their computer, but finds that the amount of RAM left for their programs is insufficient for their

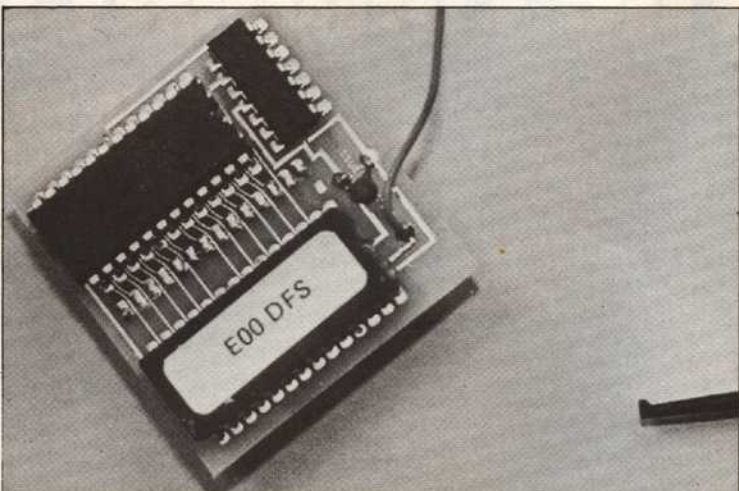
needs. The way in which the MRM DFS operates is the same as Acorn's and MRM assume that any manuals and formatting disks are provided by the supplier of the original DFS and therefore do not supply any themselves.

The MRM DFS cannot be considered to be fully Acorn compatible because of the

inability to open up to five files simultaneously. However, MRM do offer the facility to keep the original and their DFS in the machine at the same time and to switch between them when necessary.

Only worth thinking about if you need a little extra RAM.

Stephen Hamill





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Reviews

Zaps & pows

Program *Spectrum Sound Effects* **Micro** Spectrum **Price** £7.95 **Supplier** MFM Data Services, 141a Camden Road, Tunbridge Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2RA.

Let's face it — the Spectrum isn't ever going to have amazing sound no matter what.

What has been achieved with the programs that have appeared so far is nevertheless pretty surprising though — zaps and pows never thought possible.

There are a few programs on sale to let you play around with the sound on the Spectrum — basically using machine code you can make a number

of very short boring sounds appear to be one interesting sound.

Perhaps the best of these programs is *Spectrum Sound Effects* from MEM Data Services. This program lets you design and store sounds and then play them using the keyboard. It will even show you a (sort of) waveform for the sound. You can incorporate sounds into your own programs and keep a library of 50 sounds in the computer at any time.

Despite the limitations, it's certainly good fun for people who like to play around with sounds although Commodore 64 owners should try to restrain their mirth.

Ian Waltham



Sand-bags

Program *Answer Back Junior Quiz* **Price** £10.95 **Micro** BBC B **Supplier** Kosmos Software, 1 Pilgrim's Close, Harlington, Dunstable, Beds.

Save the maiden on the battlements from a nasty dragon! Answer the ques-

tion correctly and your hot-air balloon is free to chase the beast and bomb it with sand-bags. That's the reward for success in Keith Spence's quiz program. It's important because otherwise you might just buy a quiz book. Apart from this bit of arcade action, you finish up with a score sheet that includes the number of maidens eaten!

After loading a master han-

Dizzy!

Program *Alien Break In Micro* **Electron** **Price** £6.95 **Supplier** Romik Software, 272 Argyll Avenue, Slough, Bucks.

My first impression when I saw the screen display of *Alien Break In* was how extraordinarily fast it was. For the Electron, or even the BBC, this display of aliens whizzing around the screen is enough to send you dizzy. What a pity, therefore, that the game doesn't allow continuous firing, but only one bullet at a time until that bullet reaches its target.

The mother ship lays pods that hatch on landing or split into two if shot. Other ships peel off from the main fleet and fire towards holes made in the defences. The successful ones mutate into mother ships which are indestructible.

Alien Break In is a cross between *Space Invaders*, *Killer Moths* and a few other games, all of a similar nature with a

ding program, you select one of 15 general knowledge quizzes such as 'Nature', 'TV Films and Theatre', 'Games and

similar objective in mind. Having accepted this lack of originality, there was much I was impressed with, not so much the game itself but in the way Romik Software have given a lot of consideration to the needs of the player.

At the beginning, you are allowed to choose your own keys with which to play; so often games producers choose difficult key combinations. You can, also at the very beginning, choose your level of play. If like me, you're not so hot at some games, it gets rather discouraging to be stuck at one level.

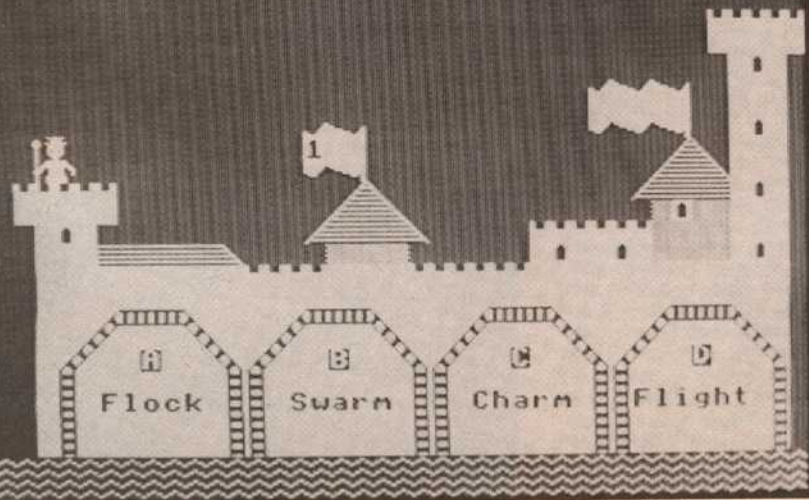
Also a rare facility is the incorporation of an automatic demonstration of the game should you not press the space bar to begin. How often are the instructions as clear as mud and, until you've been 'killed' several times, impossible to grasp the objective.

So whilst the game is like so many others it merits praise for its user considered facilities. Well done, Romik Software.

Fred Short



What is a group of bees known as?



Sport'. Then choose the number of questions and whether to be timed. There are three formats: multiple choice (choose A,B,C or D); yes/no or complete the answer (where I?er? are missed out and you have to type them in.) You can choose which format or have a random selection. I could not fault Susan Van Baars's question research.

The quizzes can be modified or you can invent your own. The master program makes this extremely easy and demands no programming knowledge. This facility alone will recommend it to many teachers.

Finally, a word of special praise for Roz Woodcock's very attractive cover painting (14" x 8" when opened out). This brings micro program packaging into the same class as top-rate album sleeves, though it would not reproduce well in our columns.

Dave Walterson

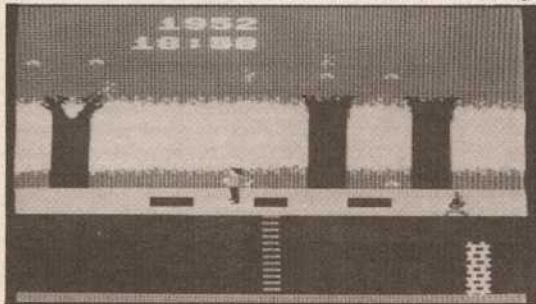


Jungle life

Program Pitfall Micro Commodore 64 **Price** £9.99 **Supplier** Activision UK, CGL House, Goldings Hill, Loughton, Essex

Pitfall from Activision is another jungle game for the Commodore 64.

In fact, it bears an amazing similarity to another game recently reviewed — *Cuthbert in the Jungle* — the setting, the hazards and the goals are all the same.



Not surprising then that — since this is the original — Activision have recently taken legal action to stop Microdeal continuing to sell *Cuthbert*.

In this official version of the game you have to guide someone called Harry through the jungle in search of various valuables like money bags, silver and gold bars and diamond rings. However, there

are plenty of obstacles in his way — if the cobras or quicksands don't get you, the crocodiles or rolling logs probably will. You have to avoid these hazards by either jumping over them or swinging over them on a vine. An alternative route is via the underground tunnels, but these contain deadly scorpions and the path is sometimes blocked by brick walls.

Although the range of hazards is quite small, variety is produced by changing their distribution on the different screens as Harry runs through

the jungle. The graphics are nicely done, and the overall presentation is better than the otherwise almost identical *Cuthbert in the Jungle*. Like *Cuthbert* the game is good fun for a while, but it soon becomes rather repetitive.

Richard Corfield



Detonated

Program Blocker **Price** £7.95 **Micro** BBC B **Supplier** Thor, Erskine Industrial Estate, Liverpool.

This fast action game by Martin J. Sykes involves running to collect a set of detonators. You can only tread on blocks, but they disintegrate after you pass so choose a path with care. There is screen wraparound so you can go in a single step from one edge of the screen to the opposite one. Obstacles in the form of TNT sticks appear on some blocks — hit them and you die. You must complete the task in 20 seconds or be fried by a million volts!

Just to make the task harder, you are pursued by giant boots; if they tramp on you it's all over!

Between frames of the main game there is a diversion for bonus points. A simpler version of the field of blocks is presented with just one detonator at the bottom of the screen. You start by bouncing left to right at the top of the screen and choose your moment to dive for the detonator — trying to avoid any TNT.

The action, if not totally original, is fast, furious and just simple enough for you to feel frustrated when you cannot quite make it, so you try again... and again... Very good fun.

Dave Atterson



Forgettable

Program Oracle's Cave Micro Commodore 64 **Price** £7.99 **Supplier** Dorcas Software, 3 The Oasis, Glenfield, Leicester

Oracle's Cave from Dorcas Software follows the current trend of combining an adventure game with some graphics to add to the interest.

In the game, you find yourself in a mysterious cave complex, into which you have inadvertently wandered. To escape, you must collect up 40 units of treasure, including that guarded by the cave dweller of your choice, and then defeat the mighty Oracle, all within five days.

The screen is divided into various sections. The top half shows you a picture of the part of the cave where you are currently standing. Another

part displays your present status — energy, strength and what you are carrying. A third area gradually builds up a map of the caves, which saves you the bother of drawing your own.

It is a fairly standard, uncomplicated adventure with not many locations or objects to bother about. Although quite nicely presented the game does have one or two irritations. For example, all the commands and objects are represented by one-letter codes which are rather forgettable. Also, if you accidentally clear the screen, the display is ruined and it never sorts itself out.

It is difficult to see who this game will appeal to. Dedicated adventure gamers will probably find it too simple and there is no action to appeal to arcade fans.

Richard Corfield



Gin sling

Program Shaken Not Stirred Micro QL **Price** £9.95 **Supplier** Soft in the Head, Front basement, 67 Earl's Court Square, London SW5 9DQ

The first non-serious QL program (well, serious to some maybe) is *Shaken Not Stirred* by the wonderfully named Soft in the Head Software.

What this ingenious and vital program does is provide you with the recipe for most cocktails known to mankind.

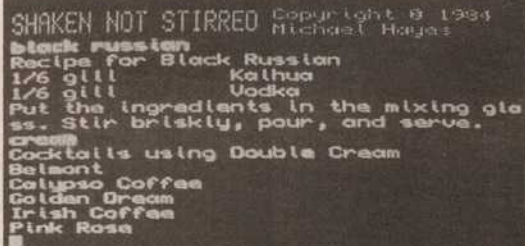
The system to find the cocktail could hardly be simpler, you simply type in a series of letters and the computer

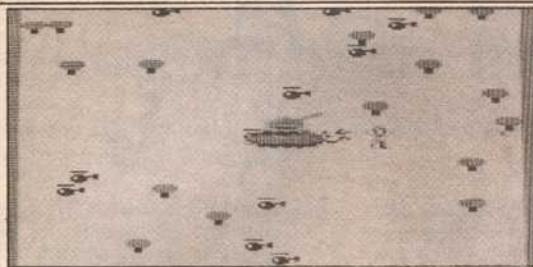
finds any cocktail or ingredient containing those letters; for example, typing mar will find you Márgarita whilst gren will find you both the cocktail grenadier as well as grenadine the ingredient.

The only problem appears to be that there is no facility to add your own cocktails to the database and I suspect that many of the cocktails are also known by a vast number of other names so a synonym collection would have been useful.

It should also be noted that the program costs £9.95, a price doubtless not unrelated to the fact that blank microdrives cost £4.

Ian Waltham





Invisible wall

Program *Spy School Micro*
Commodore 64 Price £3.95
Supplier Dimension 21, 91 The Broadway, Southall, Middx.

It's a pleasant change to come across a new arcade game which seems to have an original theme. In *Spy School* from Dimension 21, as the name implies, you have to perform various tricky tasks which even James Bond might find intimidating.

You have to shoot down a whole squadron of enemy helicopters. You have to collect a briefcase (no doubt full of secret documents) and make your escape while dodging detector beams which trigger off a deadly rain of shells. Or

you have to find your way to safety through a maze of trees, mines and invisible walls.

After you complete each task the rescue helicopter arrives to fly you back to home base. If you achieve all the objectives on level one, the whole process is repeated, but is made a bit more tricky.

The game is quite interesting for a while, especially as the theme is rather unusual, but, unfortunately, it does become rather repetitive.

What is more, the graphics and sound are rather lacklustre and really not up to the high standard which most games for the 64 now achieve.

A pity, because the idea itself has plenty of potential.

Richard Corfield



Melt-down

Program *Atom Smasher Micro*
Electron Price £6.95 **Supplier** Romik Software, 272 Argyll Avenue, Slough, Berks.

The object of *Atom Smasher* is to prevent melt down of a nuclear reactor. All I can say is, if what the game requires is all that is needed to prevent the real thing happening, then living as I do within two miles of a nuclear power station which was approximately nine years behind schedule and is constantly taken "off line" because of "slight hick-ups", it does not justify the constant worry I have of the real thing happening.

The game begins with a blue electron moving rather erratically around the neutron. To delay melt down you must shoot the proton, which moves

around the purple nucleus, with your remote controlled super laser.

Each time you shoot the proton, an extra electron appears. If you collide with an electron, you lose one of your three lives. If you shoot an electron, everything speeds up for a short time until the electrons cool down a little. If you delay shooting, melt down starts.

The molten debris approaches the nucleus from each side. You can blast the debris away, but the only way that you can stop it from advancing is to keep shooting the proton.

That's the theory of the game. *Atom Smasher* is yet another example of the actual game not living up to the excitement which the written blurb attempts so colourfully to infuse into a prospective purchaser.

Fred Short



Star map

Program *Starseeker Price*
£7.95 Micro BBC B Supplier
Mirrorsoft, Holborn Circus,
London EC1P 1DQ.

Starseekers could only exist in a Planetarium or on a computer. The main program shows you the stars — from anywhere on Earth and at any time between 1st January 1900 and 31st December 2100. You can look in any direction and zoom in on items of interest.

The constellations can be outlined and named, and by placing a cursor over any star, you can learn its vital statistics. It's even possible to dump key images onto an Epson printer

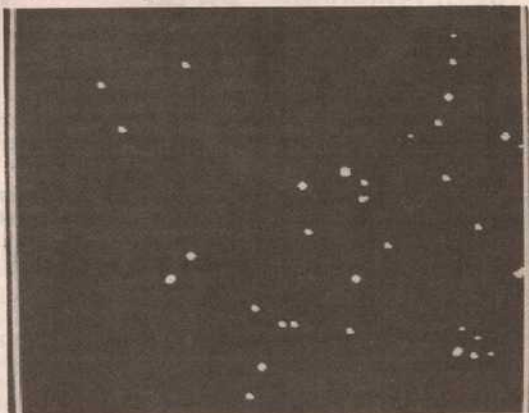
and carry a star-map with you at night.

There is a mass of information in this program and booklet; it's here astronomy comes to life. You can even watch stars move as the night progresses.

The second part is *Solar System* which provides similar detailed views of our home area, paying special attention to the Moon and Halley's comet. The comet comes close to earth once every 76 years and early 1986 will be the best time to see it.

The program is sensitive about any extra paged ROMs on board your Beeb. A quick poke of $\&2AD=0$ before loading solves that.

Dave Watterson



Deadly spikes

Program *Ghouls Micro Electron Price* £6.95 **Supplier** Micro Power, Sheepscar House, Sheepscar Street South, Leeds LS7 1AD

I was beginning to wonder if games inventors had run out of ideas, since quite a lot of so called 'new' games have obviously been rehashes of older tried and tested models. *Ghouls* nearly comes into this category with its similar nature to *Pacman* type games.

Your task is to rescue the power jewels from the creepy mansion on the top of the hill. Sounds easy until you are confronted with deadly spikes, not to mention the nasty spider that jumps up and down ready

to catch you. Eating the yellow titbits earns you extra points and a stray power jewel causes the ghosts to disappear.

The game gives you the choice of key control or joystick, but not those used with Acorn's Plus 1. This highlights the problem Acorn have given their Plus 1 buyers, since to date Electron interfaces have opted for the more familiar switch type joystick and games producers like Micro Power have incorporated switched joystick option.

I like the novelty of the game, the option of stopping the action mid-game, sound or no sound and more important, the option of returning to the instructions.

Fred Short



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Recalled from memory

Graeme Brown helps you trace characters in memory with his machine code program

This short machine code routine allows you to input the coordinates of a character position and it will return with the address in the display file that corresponds to the top pixel row of that position. This may be useful within a larger machine code program when the construction of a graphic is required. Once the top pixel address is known, the remaining 7 lines can be found simply by adding 256 to each address until the complete character position is filled. It is, in some ways, easier to do this routine in Basic but the machine code version shown here is intended as a subroutine to a larger program that can be called when required.

The program itself is quite simple and makes use of the following formula:

Top, Address (X Y) = $16384 + \text{INT}(X/8) * 2048 + (X - \text{INT}(X/8) * 8) * 32 + Y$

where X = Row coordinate

Y = Column coordinate using the

Print At format.

The program is shown in listing 1 in a demonstration form and lines 10 to 50 *Poke* the code directly into memory. It uses the printer buffer so disconnect your printer if you have one. I use the printer buffer for testing any short routines since *Ramtop* does not need to be moved and at 256 bytes long it is big enough for most routines.

The program asks you first for the row coordinate then the column coordinate of the required position. It will return from the routine and print the address. If the routine is included as a subroutine within a larger program, then the swapping of the HL and the BC registers is not strictly required. This was done as part of the demonstration to enable the calculated value to be "handed back" to the Basic operating system.

```
LD HL,      : Load address containing ROW
              ROWSTORE coordinate
LD B, (HL)  : Put it into B
INC HL      : Point to address of COLUMN
              coordinate
```

LD C, (HL)	: Put it into C
LD HL, 16384	: Start of display file
LD A, 248	: Load mask and use to find
AND B	which screen portion the
	required address is in
PUSH AF	: Save this value on stack
ADD A, H	: Add it to the HIGH byte of
LD H, A	: HL
LD A, B	: Get ROW coordinate
POP DE	: Load DE with screen portion
	Indicator
SUB A, D	: Reduce ROW no. to a line within
	a particular screen portion
ADD A, A	:
ADD A, A	:
ADD A, A	: Multiply by 32
ADD A, A	:
ADD A, A	:
ADD A, C	: Add COLUMN coordinate
LD L, A	: Makes the result the LOW byte
	of HL
PUSH HL	: Swap HL and BC
POP BC	:
RET	: Return

Note

The swapping of the HL and BC registers is only required if the program is being run in response to a *User* command. This is to ensure that the address required can be printed using the Basic command *Print User* storage address. If the routine is used as a sub routine within a larger M/C program then the address can be left in the HL register as it is normally used for this purpose.

```

0010 00000000 *** ADDRESS FINDER ***
0020 00000000 *****
0030 00000000 R=23305 TO 23332
0040 00000000 READ D
0050 00000000 POKE R,D
0060 00000000 NEXT R
0070 00000000 DATA 33,4,91,70,35,78,33,0
0080 00000000 104,180,245,132,103,120,20
0090 00000000 103,135,135,135,135,129,11
0100 00000000 201
0110 00000000 ***COORDS INPUT***
0120 00000000 *****
0130 00000000 PRINT "INPUT THE ROW COORDI
NATE"
0140 00000000 INPUT R
0150 00000000 IF R>23 THEN PRINT AT 12,4:
INVALID INPUT": PAUSE 100: CLS
0160 00000000 GO TO 90
0170 00000000 PRINT "INPUT THE COLUMN COO
RDINATE"
0180 00000000 INPUT C
0190 00000000 IF C>31 THEN PRINT AT 12,4:
INVALID INPUT": PAUSE 100: CLS
0200 00000000 GO TO 120
0210 00000000 CLS POKE 23300,R: POKE 23
300,C
0220 00000000 PRINT J=23305
0230 00000000 PRINT USA J
0240 00000000 STOP
0250 00000000 PRINT "INPUT THE COLUMN COO
RDINATE"

```

7D00		0005	ORG	32000
7D00	21045B	0010	LD	HL, 23300
7D03	48	0020	LD	B, (HL)
7D04	23	0030	INC	HL
		0040		
7D05	210040	0050	LD	HL, 15364
7D08	3EF8	0070	LD	A, 248
7D0A	40	0080	AND	B
7D0B	F5	0090	PUSH	AF
7D0C	84	0100	ADD	H
7D0D	67	0110	LD	H, A
7D0E	78	0120	LD	A, B
7D0F	D1	0130	POP	DE
		0140		
7D10	92	0150	SUB	D
		0160		
7D11	87	0170	ADD	A
7D12	87	0180	ADD	A
7D13	87	0190	ADD	A
7D14	87	0200	ADD	A
7D15	87	0210	ADD	A
		0220		
7D16	81	0230	ADD	C
7D17	8F	0240	LD	L, A
		0250		
7D18	E5	0260	PUSH	HL
7D19	C1	0270	POP	BC
		0280		
7D1A	C9	0290	RET	
		0300	END	

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Tracing a line

Andrew Pennell makes use of the QL's multi-tasking to give the machine a Trace facility

This program uses the most powerful feature of the QL—multi-tasking—to add a Trace ability to SuperBasic.

To my knowledge, not only is this the first QL machine-code program to be published, but it must be the first to use multi-tasking. What it does is to set up a small program that constantly monitors Basic, and prints the current line number at the top of the screen. It can do this as it seemingly runs at the same time as the Basic interpreter.

To use it, firstly type in the listing, and save it before running. Next, Run it, and you should be greeted with "loaded OK". If you get "wrong data", then you must have made a mistake in the data somewhere. To turn the Trace on, you have to Call 261120 (it's important that you only do this call once). You should get "-0" printed at the very top left of the screen. Next you should Call 261192,8, which sets the speed of the trace to an average value. From now on, any

program that Runs should be accompanied by a display along the top of the screen of the line number each time it changes, separated by dashes.

On my television, there is quite a gap between the top of the screen, and the top of the listing window. If you don't have such a gap on yours, you can change Line 160 to position your Trace window at a more convenient place, but try not to make it clash with any other windows. If you changed it to a\$="ser1" then the trace will appear on a printer, but firstly set the printer's width using control codes, or else it will all be printed on one line of paper!

A machine-code program that runs under multi-tasking is known as a 'job', and normally on the QL only one job is running — the Basic interpreter. However, what the machine-code does is to set up a second job, the sole purpose of which is to print line numbers every time they change. Each job

has a speed factor, from 1 to 32, and this determines how fast it runs compared to the other jobs. Basic runs at the maximum of 32, but Trace works OK at a speed of 8, and this is what the CALL 261192 is for — you can change the speed of the Trace. Normally 8 is OK, but sometimes 16 gives better results, and if you want to be extravagant you could get it to run at 32. Note that the faster you make the Trace, the slower Basic runs at, so that a Trace speed of 32 will make Basic half its normal speed. A speed of 0 will switch Trace off, and make Basic run normally.

With Trace enabled, the Respr function cannot be used, and will give a 'not complete' error. Also, during some I/O operations, you can get strange numbers printed, and a Mode instruction makes the print-out disappear, for (as yet) unknown reasons. After you've run the loader program, you can safely do a New — Trace will remain intact, and possibly running.

An assembly language listing of this program, along with masses of other information, will shortly be available in my forthcoming book *Assembly Language Programming on the Sinclair QL* published by Sunshine Books.

```

10 REMark *****
20 REMark ***** TRACE *****
30 REMark *(C) Andrew Pennell 1984**
40 REMark *****
50 REPEAT makeroom
60 IF RESPR(0)<=261120 THEN EXIT makeroom
70 a=RESPR(1024)
80 END REPEAT makeroom
90 t=0
100 RESTORE
110 FOR i=261120 TO 261305
120 READ a
130 POKE i,a:t=t+a
140 NEXT i
150 IF t<>12642 THEN PRINT #0;"wrong
data":STOP
160 a$="scr_400x12a40x4"
170 POKE W 261220,LEN(a$)
180 FOR i=1 TO LEN(a$):POKE 261221+i,
CODE(a$(i))
190 PRINT "TRACE loaded OK"
210 PRINT "to setup: CALL 261120"
220 PRINT "speed : CALL 261192,?"

```

```

230 DATA 114,0,36,60,0,0,0,62
240 DATA 66,131,34,67,112,1,78,65
250 DATA 67,250,0,76,34,129,34,124
260 DATA 0,3,252,124,36,60,0,0
270 DATA 0,61,16,217,81,202,255,252
280 DATA 112,1,118,2,65,250,0,54
290 DATA 78,66,67,250,0,38,34,136
300 DATA 16,60,0,10,34,58,0,32
310 DATA 116,1,118,0,78,65,78,117
320 DATA 34,121,0,2,128,104,34,105
330 DATA 0,4,19,65,0,19,66,128
340 DATA 78,117,0,0,0,0,0,0
350 DATA 0,0,255,255,0,15,83,67
360 DATA 82,95,52,48,48,88,49,50
370 DATA 65,52,48,88,52,0,0,0
380 DATA 0,0,0,0,46,124,0,4
390 DATA 0,0,32,121,0,3,252,90
400 DATA 34,121,0,2,128,16,50,41
410 DATA 0,208,178,121,0,3,252,98
420 DATA 103,232,51,193,0,3,252,98
430 DATA 18,60,0,45,118,255,112,5
440 DATA 78,67,50,57,0,3,252,98
450 DATA 52,121,0,0,0,206,78,146
460 DATA 96,200

```


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Error trap

Wayne Smithson helps cut down Dragon loading problems with this machine code utility

Although the Dragon has superior saving and loading procedures to many of its rivals, that doesn't stop the dreaded I/O Error occurring...

Here is a program to combat the I/O Error and so relieve the tension of Dragon owners everywhere.

This program sits at the top of Ram and, whenever a *Cload* or *Cloadm* command is typed in, the program notes which you chose and, if an I/O Error occurs, the program effectively types it in again for you. When you type *Cloadm* in, the program doesn't remember the name, however; this is in case you get an I/O Error in the middle

of a program or you type in the wrong name. In other words, the computer will search for a file of the name typed unless an I/O Error is encountered, in which case the next valid file will be loaded in.

After some thought, I decided not to check for an *FM Error*. This is because you may want to find a file on a cassette without loading it in. To do this just type *Cloadm* for a Basic program and *Cload* for a machine code program. The computer will click through the tape until it finds the file, the name will be printed on the screen and an *FM Error* will occur. You will then be just past the beginning of that program, and

no corruption will have taken place.

The program itself occupies 66 bytes at the top of Ram, it isn't repositionable unless you have an assembler. The Basic loader will insert the machine code and check it for mistakes. The assembler listing is included with brief notes for those interested.

Some locations of interest are:-

401-403 Whenever an error occurs, Basic jumps here and does nothing in particular, so you can intercept any error. (Each has a number held in the B ACC. If B=0 then no error).

377-379 Whenever a Basic command is typed in, a jump is made here which does nothing so intercept this and you can tell which command has been typed in. (Token will be in A ACC).

&HA6 Basic pointer, tokenise a Basic line, store it address pointed to by this location-1, load A ACC. with the first token and the computer will think it is running a Basic line (dope!). Each 'line' must end with a 0.

The Basic tokens can be found in PCW (Vol 2 No 42) October 1983 and please note that:-

Cload token=153
Cloadm token=153,77 (A ACC.=77)

```
*****I/O ERROR GO HOME*****
```

```
*****WAYNE J SMITHSON*****
```

```
ORG #32701 *THESE CAN BE
PUT #32701 *CHANGED.
```

```
CMAPA #153 *CLOAD/M ?
BNE OUT *NO, RETURN
LDX #A6
LDB 1,X *CHECK FOR
CMPB #77 *CLOADM
BEQ MCODE *YES, KEEP 'B'
CLRB *NO, CLEAR 'B'
MCODE STD $7FFE *TEMP. STORE
LDX #ERROR
STX 402 *INTERCEPT
LDA #7E *ERROR HANDLER
STA 401 *TO MY ROUTINE
LDA #153 *CLOAD/M TOKEN
```

```
OUT RTS
ERROR CMPB #42 *I/O ERROR ?
BEQ IOERR *YES, RELOAD
CLEAR LDX #3939 *RESTORE ERROR
STX 401 *HANDLER
STX 402
RTS
IOERR LDD $7FFE *GET TEMP.
LDY #A6 *STORE & CLEAR
CLR 1,Y *PUT TEMP. AT
STD ,-Y *LESS 'Y'
CMPB #0 *CLOAD ?
BEQ CLOAD *YES
LDA #77 *NO, CLOADM
CLOAD JSR 46804 *JSR CLOAD/M
BRA CLEAR *GOTO BASIC.
```

```
0 CLEAR200,32700:CLS:PRINT"machine code
loading"
1 FORN=1 TO 65:READ A$
2 POKE32700+N,VAL("&H"+A$):PRINT@32,3270
0+N
3 C=C+VAL("&H"+A$):NEXT
4 IF C<>7771 THENPRINT"cock-up!":SOUND1,
10:END
5 POKE378,&H7F:'HEX ADDRESS OF
6 POKE379,&HBD:'MY ROUTINE.
7 POKE377,&H7E:'TO ENABLE
8 'POKE377,&H39 TO DISABLE.
9 PRINT"load successful!":SOUND150,10
10 DATA 81,99,26,19,9E,A6,E6,01,C1,4D,27
,01,5F,FD,7F,FE,8E,7F,DB,BF,01,92,86,7E,
B7,01,91,86,99,39,C1,2A,27,0A,8E,39,39,B
F,01,91,BF,01,92,39,FC,7F,FE,10,9E,A6,6F
,21,ED,A2,C1,00,27,02,86,4D,BD,B6,D4,20,
E1
=====> BASIC LOADER <=====
```


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In the heat of the night

Alex Treacher's program enables you to predict and calculate the rate of meteor showers

I find that observing meteor showers, or shooting stars, can be the most satisfying form of astronomy. All you need is a deck-chair and warm clothing. (It gets quite chilly at 3am, even in the summer). To make accurate observations you will need a tape recorder or pen and paper to note what you see. Then, just sit back and watch!

The activity of a particular meteor shower — ie, meteors per hour — starts off at zero, increases, peaks, and then diminishes again. The date and time of these occurrences can be found in various publications, such as *The Astronomical Almanac*, and the *Handbook of the British Astronomical Association*, as they vary from year to year. The activity is measured by the Zenithal Hourly Rate (ZHR). If the radiant (ie, the point in the sky the meteors seem to be coming from) was directly overhead — at the zenith — and the weather conditions were perfect, the number of meteors observed every hour should come very close to the ZHR. Are all these conditions ever met? Not a chance.

Hence this program: working on average figures for the showers' rates, which strictly speaking ought to be updated every year, this program calculates the Expected Hourly Rate for the showers included in the program. I have excluded data on several minor showers, as they are often difficult to observe. To include these, their rates for

each day should be put into the data for array RT% (lines 1440-1620), add the appropriate data between lines 1330 and 1420, and alter the day-number testing (lines 260-350) to recognise the appropriate dates, and to collect the data.

Some of the showers extend beyond the dates in the program, but as the ZHR for these days is less than five, the shower would hardly be noticeable. I have made the Ursids the exception to this rule because they are very poorly observed. They occur so close to Christmas that, even if the sky is clear, everyone is so full of bonhomie that meteors are the last thing on their mind!

I'm still working on the Proc to figure out if it's going to be cloudy! In the meantime, good observing.

Important Variables

Y Year
M Month
D Date
T Time
Daynum Number of day (1-366) that has been selected.
RT%() Rate for every day in year.
Strms Name of selected stream.
Fsts First day of activity (day/month)
Lsts Last day of activity (day/month)
Max Date of maximum activity
Mxahr ZHR for above date
Rate ZHR for the selected day.

Ehr Activity expected for date and time selected

Ra Right Ascension of radiant (decimal)
Dec Declination of radiant (decimal)

Line Descriptions

180-210 User input: numerical input for all responses. Time should be in decimal form.
2630-350 Identifies which stream visible (if any) and selects correct data.
400 Puts an ending on the date of maximum.
430-510 Displays data.
1020-1040 If the rate for the selected date is zero, the program assumes that no shower is present.
1330-1420 Data for individual streams.
1440-160 Rate for each day of year.

Procedures

Procdataload Reads lines 1440-1620 into array RT%.
Procdaynum Calculates how many days into year the selected date is. (Accounts for leap years.)
Procalt_az Calculates elevation and bearing of the radiant. Line 860: Replace 0.0276 with -0.066 for every degree you are west of Greenwich.
Lines 900 and 930: Replace 51.82 by your own latitude (decimal).
Procehr Correction of Hourly Rate for altitude of radiant.

```

L.
10 REM METEOR VISIBLTY V1.5
20 REM 84/8/1 A.T.
30
40 REM Procalt-az originally written
50 REM for ZX81 by W. Cartwright
60
70
80 *TV255
90 MODE7
100 VDU23,1,0,0,0,0;
110 PRINTTAB(9,10)CHR$141;"METEOR VISIB
110 LITY"
120 PRINTTAB(9)CHR$141;"METEOR VISIBILI
120 TY"
130 W=INKEY(300)
140 PROCdataload
150 REPEAT
160 CLS
170 VDU23,1,1,0,0,0;
180 INPUT "Year ",Y
190 INPUT "Month ",M
200 INPUT "Day ",D
210 INPUT "Time ",T
220 VDU23,1,0,0,0,0;
230 PROCdaynum
240 SS=DAYNUM
250 CLS
260 IFSS>1 AND SS<6 RESTORE1340 GOT036
270 IFSS>109 AND SS<115 RESTORE1350 GO
270 T0360
280 IFSS>116 AND SS<137 RESTORE1360 GO
280 T0360
290 IFSS>213 AND SS<229 RESTORE1370 GO
290 T0360
300 IFSS>291 AND SS<298 RESTORE1380 GO
300 T0360
310 IFSS>304 AND SS<313 RESTORE1390 GO
310 T0360
320 IFSS>319 AND SS<324 RESTORE1400 GO
320 T0360
330 IFSS>343 AND SS<350 RESTORE1410 GO
330 T0360
340 IFSS>352 AND SS<358 RESTORE1420 GO
340 T0360
350 IFSS>50RSS<1100R SS>1140RSS<1170R
SS>1360R SS<2140R SS>2280R SS<2920R SS>2
97 OR SS<3050R SS>3120R SS<3280R SS>3230
R SS<3440R SS>3490R SS<3530R SS>357 ORSS
=1 THEN1020
360 READSTRM$,MAX,FSTS,LSTS,MXZHR,RA,D
EC
370 Procalt_az
380 RATE=RT%(DAYNUM)
390 Procehr
400 DT$="th":IFINT(MAX+.5)=1 DT$="st"
ELSE IFINT(MAX+.5)=2 DT$="nd" ELSE IFINT
(MAX+.5)=3 DT$="rd"
410 CLS
420 TT=20-(LENSTRM$)/2
430 PRINTTAB(TT)STRM$
440 PRINT
450 PRINT"The shower extends from ",FSTS
TS," to ",LSTS
460 PRINT"The date of maximum is the
",MAX,DT$
470 PRINT"The ZHR at maximum is ",MXZ
HR
480 PRINT"The ZHR for today is ",RATE
490 PRINT"for ",T," UT on ",D,"/"/M

```

continued over the page

[illegible]

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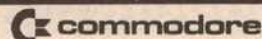
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And to follow . . .

Adrian Warman continues with the second part of his menu program

This week we finish off the assembly listing of the program and also present a Basic loader for those without assemblers.

How the Program works (cont from last week.)

70-73. Finds the value for *ystart*. This value is also placed in *row*, which is used to keep track of which screen row the selection cursor is currently on.

74-80. Finds the value for *xend*. Ensures that it is greater than *ystart*.

81-82. Finds the current position of the text screen, and adds this to the *posn* pointer to the menu position.

86-89. *Posn* is the master value of the screen position. Knowing the current row that the selection cursor is on, it is necessary to convert this to a memory location, stored in *from*.

90-99. *Row* has the screen row that the selection cursor is on. Using this, it calculates how many screen rows to move down to show the current position of the selection cursor.

100. Highlights this menu item.

101-103. Waits for any key-press. When found, it puts the key into *key*.

104. Removes the highlight from the menu item.

106-108. Was the key *F1*. If not goes on to check for a different key.

109-112. Moves up by the number of rows in *skip*.

113-114. If the cursor would be off the top of the screen, goes and tests to see if *wrap* is available.

115-116. Is the cursor past the top of the menu? If so, branches to the end of main loop.

117-124. The cursor is now too high. If *wrap* is allowed, sets cursor position to the bottom menu item — otherwise puts cursor on the top menu item.

126-127. Was the key *F7*. If not it ignores.

128-131. Moves down to next menu item.

132-134. If the cursor is still in the menu item rows, carries on to the end of the main program loop.

135-141. The cursor is past the end of the menu. Depending on the value of *wrap*, moves the cursor to the top or bottom of the menu column.

143-146. Makes a final check. Was the key *Return*? If not, goes and repeats the program loop until selection is made. Otherwise, finish program.

148-150. Should the selected item remain highlighted? If so, sets highlight again.

152-159. *Row* contains the screen row of the selection cursor. Uses this to calculate which menu item this was. The answer is put into the *Y* register.

160-161. Loads *A* with zero, in order to return the correct value. Finally it returns to Basic with the menu item number.

166-167. Produces the error message.

171-177. Finds the next parameter in the command line. Routine *getbyr* evaluates and returns a value in the *X* register. This is compared with the maximum value allowed. If it is OK, it returns; otherwise it produces an error.

181-187. Highlights menu item. *From* has the start address of the menu item on the screen. *Width* has the maximum number of characters to highlight.

In practice, the routine is very easy to use; but in order to make it as flexible as possible, the calling parameters must be correspondingly powerful. As with most things, the best way to learn how to use the routine is first to run the example program, and then modify it for yourself.

1000 REM BASIC LOADER FOR MENU SELECTION PROGRAM.

1010 :

1020 REM BY A. WARMAN

1030 :

1040 ADDRESS=49152

1050 SUM=0

1060 :

1070 FOR LOC=ADDRESS TO ADDRESS+273

1080 READ DATUM

1090 POKE LOC,DATUM

1100 SUM=SUM+DATUM

1110 NEXT LOC

1120 :

1130 IF SUM<>34549 THEN PRINT "SUM ERROR."

1140 :

1150 DATA 169, 14,141, 17, 3,169,192,141, 18, 3, 96, 76,238,192,169, 2

1160 DATA 32,243,192,134,139, 32,243,192,134,140,169, 6, 32,243,192,134

1170 DATA 141,224, 0,240,230,169, 40, 32,243,192,134,251,142, 60, 3, 32

1180 DATA 243,192,134,252,138, 56,229,251,141, 62, 3,240,206, 48,204,169

1190 DATA 25, 32,243,192,134,253,134,142, 32,243,192,134,254,224, 0,240

1200 DATA 186,202,228,253,144,181,173,136, 2,141, 61, 3,173, 60, 3,133

1210 DATA 20,173, 61, 3,133, 21,166,142,240, 12,169, 40, 24,101, 20,133

1220 DATA 20,144, 2,230, 21,202,208,242, 32, 5,193, 32,228,255,240,251

1230 DATA 141, 63, 3, 32, 5,193,173, 63, 3,201,133,208, 31,165,142, 56

1240 DATA 229,141,133,142,201,240,176, 4,197,253,176, 47,165,140,208, 6

1250 DATA 165,253,133,142, 16, 37,165,254,133,142, 16, 31,201,136,208, 27

1260 DATA 165,142, 24,101,141,133,142,197,254,240, 16,144, 14,165,140,208

1270 DATA 6,165,254,133,142, 16, 4,165,253,133,142,173, 63, 3,201, 13

1280 DATA 240, 3, 76, 92,192,165,139,240, 3, 32, 5,193,165,142, 56,229

1290 DATA 253,160, 0,200, 56,229,141, 16,250,169, 0,108, 5, 0,162, 14

1300 DATA 76, 55,164,141, 63, 3, 32,253,174, 32,158,183,236, 63, 3,176

1310 DATA 237,173, 63, 3, 96,172, 62, 3,177, 20, 73,128,145, 20,136, 16

1320 DATA 247,96


```

00070 c03f a9 19      lda    #$19
00071 c041 20 f3 c0   jsr    getval      ;what is ystart?
00072 c044 86 fd      stx    ystart
00073 c046 86 8e      stx    row
00074 c048 20 f3 c0   jsr    getval      ;what is yend?
00075 c04b 86 fe      stx    yend
00076 c04d e0 00      cpx    #$00
00077 c04f f0 ba      beq    badnum
00078 c051 ca          dex
00079 c052 e4 fd      cpx    ystart      ;is yend bigger than ystart?
00080 c054 90 b5      bcc    badnum
00081 c056 ad 88 02   lda    hibase
00082 c059 8d 3d 03   sta    posn+1
00083 c05c            ;
00084 c05c            ;main program loop.
00085 c05c            ;
00086 c05c ad 3c 03   loop   lda    posn      ;find menu position.
00087 c05f 85 14      sta    from
00088 c061 ad 3d 03   lda    posn+1
00089 c064 85 15      sta    from+1
00090 c066 a6 8e      ldx    row      ;move to correct row.
00091 c068 f0 0c      beq    lpend
00092 c06a a9 28      calcip lda    #$28      ;move down by one row.
00093 c06c 18          clc
00094 c06d 65 14      adc    from
00095 c06f 85 14      sta    from
00096 c071 90 02      bcc    clicend
00097 c073 e6 15      inc    from+1
00098 c075 ca          clicend dex      ;..until at correct row,
00099 c076 d0 f2      lpend   bne    calcip      ;reverse current row.
00100 c078 20 05 c1   jsr    change      ;find a command key.
00101 c07b 20 e4 ff   getchr jsr    getin
00102 c07e f0 fb      beq    getchr
00103 c080 8d 3f 03   sta    key
00104 c083 20 05 c1   jsr    change      ;restore current row.
00105 c086            ;
00106 c086 ad 3f 03   lda    key      ;test command key.
00107 c089 c9 85      cmp    #$85      ;is it f1?
00108 c08b d0 1f      bne    notup
00109 c08d a5 8e      lda    row      ;move up one row.
00110 c08f 38          sec
00111 c090 e5 8d      sbc    skip
00112 c092 85 8e      sta    row
00113 c094 c9 f0      cmp    #$f0
00114 c096 b0 04      bcs    chkwrp
00115 c098 c5 fd      cmp    ystart      ;past the top?
00116 c09a b0 2f      bcs    keydon
00117 c09c a5 8c      chkwrp lda    wrap      ;yes, so wrap or not?
00118 c09e d0 06      bne    wrapup
00119 c0a0 a5 fd      lda    ystart      ;no wrap, so move to top row.
00120 c0a2 85 8e      sta    row
00121 c0a4 10 25      bpl    keydon
00122 c0a6 a5 fe      wrapup lda    yend      ;wrap, so move to bottom.
00123 c0a8 85 8e      sta    row
00124 c0aa 10 1f      bpl    keydon
00125 c0ac            ;
00126 c0ac c9 88      notup   cmp    #$88      ;is command key f7?
00127 c0ae d0 1b      bne    keydon
00128 c0b0 a5 8e      lda    row      ;move down one row.
00129 c0b2 18          clc
00130 c0b3 65 8d      adc    skip
00131 c0b5 85 8e      sta    row
00132 c0b7 c5 fe      cmp    yend      ;past bottom?
00133 c0b9 f0 10      beq    keydon
00134 c0bb 90 0e      bcc    keydon
00135 c0bd a5 8c      lda    wrap      ;yes, is there wrap?
00136 c0bf d0 06      bne    wrapdn
00137 c0c1 a5 fe      lda    yend      ;no, so move to bottom.
00138 c0c3 85 8e      sta    row
00139 c0c5 10 04      bpl    keydon
00140 c0c7 a5 fd      wrapdn lda    ystart      ;move to top.
00141 c0c9 85 8e      sta    row
00142 c0cb            ;
00143 c0cb ad 3f 03   keydon lda    key      ;end of movement.
00144 c0ce c9 0d      cmp    #$0d      ;is it end of selection?
00145 c0d0 f0 03      beq    exit
00146 c0d2 4c 5c c0   jmp    loop
00147 c0d5            ;
00148 c0d5 a5 8b      exit    lda    retain      ;keep highlight?
00149 c0d7 f0 03      beq    noretin
00150 c0d9 20 05 c1   jsr    change
00151 c0dc            ;
00152 c0dc a5 8e      noretin lda    row      ;calculate return value.
00153 c0de 38          sec
00154 c0df e5 fd      sbc    ystart
00155 c0e1 a0 00      ldy    #$00
00156 c0e3 c8          rsloop iny
00157 c0e4 38          sec
00158 c0e5 e5 8d      sbc    skip
00159 c0e7 10 fa      bpl    rsloop
00160 c0e9 a9 00      lda    #$00
00161 c0eb 6c 05 00   jmp    ($0005)

```



```

00162 c0ee ;
00163 c0ee ;
00164 c0ee ;error routine.
00165 c0ee ;
00166 c0ee a2 0e badval ldx #$0e ;show illegal value error.
00167 c0f0 4c 37 a4 jmp error
00168 c0f3 ;
00169 c0f3 ;find next value routine.
00170 c0f3 ;
00171 c0f3 8d 3f 03 getval sta temp ;get value, cannot exceed a
00172 c0f6 20 fd ae jsr tstcom
00173 c0f9 20 9e b7 jsr getbyt ;get value in range 0-255.
00174 c0fc ec 3f 03 cpx temp
00175 c0ff b0 ed bcs badval
00176 c101 ad 3f 03 lda temp
00177 c104 60 rts
00178 c105 ;
00179 c105 ;reverse characters on screen.
00180 c105 ;
00181 c105 ac 3e 03 change ldy width
00182 c108 b1 14 chloop lda (from),y
00183 c10a 49 80 eor #Z10000000
00184 c10c 91 14 sta (from),y
00185 c10e 88 dey
00186 c10f 10 f7 bpl chloop
00187 c111 60 rts
00188 c112 ;
00189 c112 .end

errors = 00000

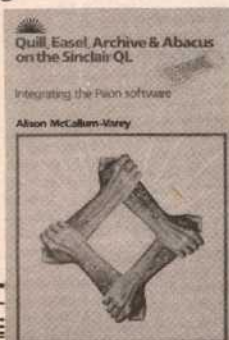
```

symbol table

symbol value

badnum	c00b	badval	c0ee	calcip	c06a	change	c105
chkrwp	c09c	chloop	c108	clend	c075	error	a437
exit	c0d5	from	0014	getbyt	b79e	getchr	c07b
getin	ffe4	getval	c0f3	hibase	0288	init	c000
key	033f	keydon	c0cb	loop	c05c	lpend	c07a
norotn	c0dc	notup	c0ac	posn	033c	retain	008b
row	008e	rsloop	c0e3	skip	008d	start	c00e
temp	033f	tstcom	aefd	usr	0311	width	033e
wrap	008c	wrapdn	c0c7	wrapup	c0a6	xend	00fc
xstart	00fb	yend	00fe	ystart	00fd		

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Open Forum

Open Forum is for you to publish your programs and ideas. Take care that the listings you send in are all bug-free. Your documentation should start with a general description of the program and what it does and then give some detail of how the program is constructed.

Revcounter

on Spectrum

This program simulates a car — the idea of the game is to accelerate to 90 M.P.H. in the least possible revs. To help you, two gears are built into the car. If you reach 90 your

driving skill will be rated.

Program notes

1-21 Program start
22-40 Variables start
900-1100 Screen set up
1113-2000 Game working out.
2999-4090 End reports
8005-8050 New game option
9000-9100 Introduction and instruction
To save the program Save "REV COUNTER" Line 1.

```
1 CLS : FLASH 0 : CLS : INK 6 :
BRIGHT 1 : PAPER 0 : BORDER 0 : CL
S : PRINT AT 10,6 : FLASH 1 : STOP
THE TAPE : FOR Z=0 TO 350 : NEXT
Z : INK 6 : PAPER 0 : BRIGHT 1 : FL
ASH 0 : PAPER 0 : BORDER 0 : CLS :
PRINT "REV COUNTER D.WESTBY 1984"

200 FOR A=0 TO 350 : NEXT A
CLS
300 REMUSE 50
40 REM D.WESTBY 1984
50 LET G=1
60 REM REV COUNTER
70 GO TO 9000
80 INK 6 : PAPER 0 : BORDER 0 : B
RIGHT 1 : FLASH 0 : CLS
900 REM VARIABLES SET UP
1000 LET G=0
1100 LET MPH=0
1200 REM DISPLAY SET UP
1300 CIRCLE 120,110,20
1400 CIRCLE 60,50,40
1500 CIRCLE 160,50,40
1600 PRINT AT 11,10,"0"
1700 PRINT AT 11,20,"30"
1800 PRINT AT 19,10,"60"
1900 PRINT AT 15,15,"90"
2000 PRINT AT 11,20,"0"
2100 PRINT AT 13,20,"30"
2200 PRINT AT 15,20,"45"
2300 PRINT AT 15,15,"60"
2400 PRINT AT 13,19,"RPM" : AT 14,
18,"#100"
2500 REM MAIN PART
2600 IF RPM=0 THEN FOR N=0 TO 75
2700 NEXT N : CLS : PRINT "THE CAR C
ONKED OUT BECAUSE YOU CHANGED G
EAR TOO EARLY!!" : FOR A=0 TO 350
2800 NEXT A : GO TO 4040
```

```
1117 FOR Z=-40 TO +50
1120 IF G=1 THEN PRINT AT 8,13 :
INK 7 : INVERSE 1 : PAPER 0 : "1"
1125 PRINT AT 8,13 : "SPEED" : MPH : A
T 0,11 : "REVS PER MIN" : RPM : "100" :
IF INKEY$="Q" THEN LET RPM=RPM+4
1130 BEEP .05,2
1135 PRINT AT 8,13 : "GEAR" :
1140 PRINT AT 8,13 : "1" : AT 8,15 : "
2" : AT 7,15 : "0" : IF G=0 THEN PRIN
T AT 7,15 : INK 7 : INVERSE 1 : "0"
1145 IF G=1 THEN PRINT AT 8,13 :
INK 7 : INVERSE 1 : "1"
1150 IF G=2 THEN PRINT AT 8,15 :
INK 7 : INVERSE 1 : "2"
1155 IF RPM=0 THEN PRINT AT 11,2
0 : INVERSE 1 : INK 7 : "0"
1160 IF INKEY$="1" THEN LET G=1 :
BEEP .05,2
1165 IF INKEY$="2" THEN LET RPM=
RPM-30 : LET G=2 : BEEP .05,4
1170 IF INKEY$="Q" THEN LET MPH=
RPM+6.25 : BEEP .05,2
1175 IF INKEY$="Q" THEN LET MPH=
MPH+4
1180 PRINT AT 8,6 : MPH
1185 IF MPH=20 THEN PRINT AT 15,
20 : INK 7 : INVERSE 1 : "20"
1190 IF MPH=30 THEN PRINT AT 15,
30 : INVERSE 1 : "30"
1195 IF MPH=40 OR MPH=90 THEN FO
R N=0 TO 200 : NEXT N : GO TO 3000
1200 PRINT AT 8,6 : MPH
1205 IF MPH=30 THEN PRINT AT 19,
40 : INK 7 : INVERSE 1 : "60"
1210 IF RPM=40 THEN PRINT AT 19,
20 : INK 7 : INVERSE 1 : "40"
1215 IF MPH=90 THEN GO TO 3000
1220 IF RPM=56 OR RPM=66 THEN PR
INT AT 15,8 : INVERSE 1 : INK 7 : "5
6" : PRINT AT 4,7 : INK 6 : FLASH 1
: "PLAY ABOUT WITH THE GEARS"
1225 IF RPM=66 THEN PRINT AT 4,0
```

Microradio

GW6JJN



Clickety-click

This column tries to keep up with the latest in computer and communications technology. This none-too-easy task will become much more difficult when new legislation and the privatisation of British Telecom come into being very soon.

Some of you are already interested in packet radio and data packet switching techniques. Commercial systems like BT and Mercury who use these systems already on a vast scale have taken the technology a

long way towards the situation where it is now possible to transmit, accurately, vast amounts of data almost anywhere in the world. Packet switching techniques make these systems fully interactive so that just as you can play a computer game in real time with an opponent across the globe linked by a satellite, so can hundreds of people be involved in an interactive situation or game within the UK.

If this were just the Prestel system, that would be one thing but it has already gone much further, particularly in the United States. There, it is possible to do all your shopping, message sending, financial dealing, responding to your favourite soap opera and even your daily work without even getting out of bed.

I suppose that there are some who may think that this sounds like heaven, but there's

no accounting for taste.

Back in 1982, the British government agreed in principle to a new, perhaps inevitable idea, called Value Added Networks or VANs for short. What this means is that following privatisation, data networks like Mercury and British Telecom will have competition from third party carriers who will be licensed to carry traffic as long as there is added value, or something special about the traffic. BT and Mercury will still be the prime normal carriers but the systems with a VANs licence will be operating the 'special' systems. Some are already in existence carrying data for the Midland Bank and various Building Societies among others.

Proposed VANs systems involve the interactive use of data systems for the public, some in conjunction with cable television, which will provide instant

opinion polls in which millions of people can take part from their own homes. Imagine the interminable panel games on the cable networks with a million or so contestants.

One idea for a VAN that has already been floated is the uniquely British game of Bingo. Packet switching operates so quickly that Bingo is believed to be feasible on a grand scale. Recent Bingo games in national newspapers have shown that there need be no limit to the number of players. It is hard to say where it might end... was that clickety-click or unlucky for some...?

Ray Berry GW6JJN

This series of articles is designed for radio and microcomputer enthusiasts alike. If you have any queries that you want answered, hints and tips to share, or topics that you would like to see covered, write to: Ray Berry, Microradio, Popular Computing Weekly, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2R 3LD.


```

1230 PRINT AT 0,6:MPH
1200 GO TO 1115
2999 REM END REPORTS
3000 CLS : PRINT "YOU REACHED 99
MPH"
3001 PRINT "YOUR REUS WERE: ";RPM
3002 PRINT INVERSE 1;"D.WESTBY R
EUS COUNTING"
4000 FOR A=0 TO 250: NEXT A
4020 IF RPM=40 OR RPM=40 AND RPM
470 THEN PRINT "YOU REUS WERE AV
ERAGE SO YOU ARE AN AVERAGE DRIVE
R"
4025 IF RPM=65 OR RPM=65 THEN PR
INT "YOU ARE A PATHETIC DRIVER.
YOUR REUS WERE FAR TOO HIGH
I ADVISE YOU TO TRY AGAIN"
4030 IF RPM=39 OR RPM=39 THEN PR
INT "EXCELLENT!!
YOU KEPT THE REUS DOWN SUPE
RSLY WHICH MEANS YOU ARE A TOP C
LASS DRIVER.
WELL DONE!!"
4050 FOR N=0 TO 500: NEXT N
4055 REM NEW GAME?
4010 CLS : PRINT AT 9,0:"FOR AND
THER GAME INPUT 1 OR TO STOP TH
EN INPUT 2!!"
4020 INPUT "YOUR DECISION": Q
4030 IF Q=1 THEN CLS : GO TO 23
4040 IF Q=2 THEN STOP
4050 IF Q=0 OR Q=1 THEN GO TO 80
4060 INK 5: LET A$="REVOUNTER"
4070 PRINT AT 21,11:AS:FOR F=1 TO 1
4080 FOR G=20 TO 0 STEP -1: BEEP
4090 F/2+20:PRINT AT G,F+10:AS(F
4100 AT G,F/2+10:":NEXT G:NEXT F
4110 FOR A=0 TO 21:PRINT AT 21,A
4120 PRINT AT 21,31:":BEEP 0.
4130 A:NEXT A:FOR B=0 TO 31:PRIN
4140 AT G,B:":PRINT AT 21,B:":
BEEP .01,6:NEXT B

```

```

5010 FOR F=0 TO 30: BEEP .04,3:
PRINT INK 5:AT 2,F:
DAVE WESTBY":NEXT F:PRINT AT
5031:":
5013 PRINT AT 15,5:":INK 5:"FOR
THE 4K ZX SPECTRUM"
5015 PRINT AT 0,8:":PRINT AT
4,0:":PRINT AT 3,0:":
5020 PRINT AT 10,11:INK 7:"PRE
SENTS":FOR N=0 TO 50: BEEP .02
5,N:NEXT N:FOR N=50 TO 0 STEP
-1: BEEP .005,N:NEXT N
5030 FOR N=0 TO 175: NEXT N
5040 BEEP .1,8: BEEP .1,4: BEEP
.1,1: BEEP .1,6: BEEP .1,8:
9050 CLS : PRINT INK 6:
REVOUNTER":PRINT
9060 PAUSE 30:PRINT AT 3,3:"Rev
counter is a simulation of a car
-The idea of the game is to ac
celerate to 90 MPH in the le
ast possible revs"
9070 PRINT :INK 6:PRINT "
control the car you use the f
ollowing keys:":PRINT "
INK 7:"To accelerate press"IN
VERSE 1:"0"PRINT "PRINT "T
o change into first gear press"
INVERSE 1:AT 15,14:PRINT
PRINT "To change into second
gear press"INVERSE 1:AT 15,14:
9080 PRINT AT 21,6:FLASH 1:"HIT
SPACE TO CONTINUE!"
9090 IF INKEY$="" THEN GO TO 22
9100 GO TO 9090

```

Revcounter
by David Westby

Arcade Avenue



Bird bait

Superior Software of Leeds have lived up to their name and released a couple of high quality, if unoriginal, arcade copies for the BBC. *Star Striker* is a version of the post-Galaxion space shoot-em-up usually called *Moon Crest*. The colourful aliens burble menacingly, swirl, split into two when shot and even fly up beneath you just when you thought it was safe to stop dodging. Asteroids and fireballs add to the difficulty but as a consolation careful docking of the three-part space ship can eventually provide you with a mega-craft capable of firing several shots at once and wiping out aliens at a cracking rate.

Mr Wiz is an almost perfect copy of *Mr Do* — the oddly named but popular arcade

game where the central character, who looks a little like Andy Pandey in the original, digs a tunnel to eat cherries. Chasing monsters can be squashed by dropping apples onto them or by throwing crystal balls. Bright colours, attractive animation and continuous music (fortunately a feature that is becoming more common on machines like the BBC and CBM 64 that have excellent sound facilities) make this game a winner.

Mr Do has since reappeared in the arcades in two other arcade games. In one, the name of which escapes me, he has to climb all over a carnival roller coaster avoiding the cars. The second, called *Mr Do's Castle*, is probably my favourite arcade game at the moment with cartoon-quality graphics, marvellous monsters and tremendous bouncy music. If Superior ever produce a good enough version of that I may have to find £400 for my own BBC.

For the 64 there are a couple of interesting new games. Commodore themselves have released the official version of Bailey's *Lazerian* — not a very successful game in this coun-

try, in fact I have only ever seen it once. This is nevertheless a very good copy. It is a three-screen game where first you must fly around a planet shooting at squirly things in the middle. When you hit them they fly out into space and chase you around. On the second screen you have to fly through some caverns avoiding swarms of nasty flying things and on the third you have a chance to blast away at a completely over the top *Phoenix*-like mothership.

Microdeal are now, sensibly, avoiding over-reliance on one micro by releasing games for the Commodore. *Arena 3000* is an interesting development despite being another version of the much-copied game *Robotron*. The company have cleverly allowed the option of using both joysticks — one to control the movement of your android and the other to control the direction of fire, just as in the original game. True *Robotron* fans will know that this is essential for achieving high scores as well as recreating the real feel of the game. However, in case you have never tried using a free-standing joystick with one

hand, well let me tell you — you haven't missed much. You must fix them down to get the full benefit. (Incidentally *Robotron* is one of the few original arcade games that have the TV screen the 'right' way up, which helps with the conversion to home computers.)

Finally, whilst on the subject of Microdeal, you may remember a few weeks ago I mentioned their new Dragon game written by Tom Mix called *Buzzard Bait*. Well, having finally seen it load, I can reveal that it is a good version of the game *Joust* where you flap around ledges on giant buzzards trying to kill the enemy with your lance by being higher than they are at the time of collision. Needless to say, the enemy have lances as well, and there's an awful lot of them at any one time.

Tony Kendle

The Arcade Corner is a new section for anyone who enjoys playing arcade games. If you have any comments, from playing tips on difficult games or programs you'd particularly like to praise (or blame) then write to: Tony Kendle, Arcade Avenue, Popular Computing Weekly, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2R 3LD.

Binary

on ZX81

This short program, which will run on a 1K machine, will convert decimal numbers to binary representation, and vice versa.

The response is almost instantaneous in Fast mode, and by converting decimal numbers on a "trial and error" basis, you will soon begin to see how binary numbers are built up from powers of 2.

The program itself is written in two distinct sections. The main program, written

in Basic, deals with the screen display and the input of numbers, and it calls the appropriate machine code subroutine to carry out the conversion. The machine code section, held in the Rem statement at line 1, is 48 bytes long and comprises three short subroutines.

1 Address 16514 to 16527 tests bits 0 to 7 of A\$(2), the single byte representing the decimal number to be converted, and places a "1" in the appropriate position in A\$(3 to 10).
2 Address 16528 to 16543 checks in turn each of the 8 members of A\$(3 to 10), which represents the binary number to be converted. If A\$(X) is a "1" then bit X of A\$(2) is set to "1", otherwise bit X remains a "0".
3 Address 16544 to 16561 is a subroutine which is called by each of the previous subroutines. This finds where A\$

is lurking in the variables area by using the system variable, DEST. (Remember that although strings and other variables get shunted around last referred to in DEST). The two register pairs HL and DE are pointed at A\$(2) and A\$(10) respectively, and the counter, BC, is set to 8 (the number of bits in a byte).
Thus, after converting binary to decimal, the bit pattern of A\$(2) is a duplicate of the string A\$(3 to 10), and vice versa for decimal to binary conversion.

- 1 Type in the listing shown in Fig. 1.
- 2 Run, and enter the hex codes on the right of Fig. 3, either as single bytes (eg, CD) or as instructions (eg, CDA040).
- 3 Delete lines 10-80.
- 4 Type in lines 15 to 260 in Fig. 2.
- 5 Save the program before Running.

```

1 REM .....
10 LET N=0
20 INPUT A$
30 LET Y=2554+N
40 LET Y=255-(CODE A$(1)-20)+C0
50 A$(2)=20
60 POKE X,Y
70 LET N=N+1
80 IF LEN A$=2 THEN GOTO 30
90 LET A$=A$(3 TO )
100 GOTO 35

```

FIG. 1

```

1 REM LN RANDACS 7C* .ACS : (
PLOT TAN LN RAND, RETURN : ACS
LEN ACS : ( POKE TAN YIE RAND7 FR
ST 15 CL 77 LPRINT "TAN "
20 PRINT "1. BIN TO DEC", "2.
DEC TO BIN"
30 INPUT A
35 CLS
40 GOTO 135:(A=1)+308:(A=2)
100 PRINT "KEY BDN, NO. IN FOR M
ENU."
105 LET A$=""
110 INPUT A$(3 TO 10)
115 IF A$(3)="H" THEN GOTO 15
120 LET A$(1)="CHR$(USR 15522)
130 PRINT A$(3 TO 10),CODE A$(2
)
140 GOTO 185
200 PRINT "KEY DEC.NO.255 MAX. (
N FOR MENU.)"
205 LET A$="0000000000"
210 INPUT D$
215 IF D$="H" THEN GOTO 15
220 LET A$(12)="CHR$(USR 0)
230 LET A$(1)="CHR$(USR 15514)
240 PRINT CODE A$(2),A$(3 TO 10
)
250 GOTO CODE "LN "

```

FIG. 2

```

4082 CALL 40A0 CD A0 40
4083 BIT 0 (HL) 00 45
4084 US 2 1 01
4085 LD 2 1
4086 DEC DE A
4087 RRC DE 0E
4088 RRC (HL) 0E
4089 CJNZ -10 0E
4090 RET 0E
4091 CALL 40A2 CD A2 40
4092 LD A, (DE) 00 45
4093 CP 10 10
4094 JR NZ, 2 0E
4095 SET S, (HL) 0E
4096 DEC DE 0E
4097 RRC (HL) 0E
4098 CJNZ -12 0E
4099 RET 0E
4100 LD A, 10 00 40
4101 LD H, (A012) 12 40
4102 INC HL 00 40
4103 PUSH HL 00 40
4104 LD DE, 08 00 00
4105 ADD HL, DE 00 00
4106 LD D, H 00 00
4107 LD C, L 00 00
4108 POP HL 00 01
4109 LD BC, 000 00 00
4110 RET 00

```

FIG. 3

Binary

by Stuart Clarke

Baud Walk



The password

News first as usual on the Baud Walk. The biggest concerns IBM and BT's joint announcement to develop standard protocols for interconnection between networks. This is obviously going to make life easier in years to come for us networkers. On the political front, it will stop IBM — hopefully — steam-rolling its own network architecture in the UK to the detriment of all others.

Another piece of good news, is that Prestel, the viewdata service, plans to launch its own educational service for micro users this January. They are about to go the rounds of

secondary education in the UK offering cheap connect time, subscriptions and a variety of hardware and software. The major problem I can see, perhaps, with this service is the position of the telephone in schools and its possible abuse.

I thought it was worth describing the special user instructions when accessing bulletin boards. The first few calls can be very difficult and distressing at times until you eventually get the hang of them.

Bulletin boards normally require a 300/300 band modem — although 1200/75 band is increasing in popularity. A full list appeared in the networking feature in the August 2 issue.

Information about software for the boards can be obtained from the association of Free Public Access Systems, 421 Endike Lane, Hull. If you do write make sure you send an SAE and describe which configuration of micro and modem you have.

When logging on to these boards, first listen for the carrier tone. Switch your modem on and type C/R (carriage return) or COM C/R. The screen will normally clear and ask you to type in your call name. That registers with the system operating software (sysops), so stick to one call sign for subsequent calls.

Some systems will ask for a password. It is the system's way often of identifying what type of terminal you are. The answerback should be cbbs in lower case or toos. Typing Help or F for re-format at this stage may be your only way out.

Bulletin boards will then display your menu options, which will vary according to the degree of complexity and services of the board.

The most common are as follows:

- R — Read messages left on the board
- Q — Quick scan of messages

currently on

- K — Kill message
- M — Electronic mail section
- L — Leave message on board
- S — Special interest group area
- B — Bulletins
- I — Information request
- T — Elapsed time
- D — Download files
- Hash — Upload files
- G — Goodbye, log-off
- F — Reconfigure terminal
- C — Chat to sysops
- U — User-log of other callers

Keep this list handy until you've got the hang of it. The only real way to learn, however, is get that dial going.

Robin Wilkinson

Baud Walk is a new weekly column with news on networking, databases, reviews of modems and software and points of contact for information.

Any readers with experience of networking are asked to send their experiences or news of services to Robin Wilkinson, Baud Walk Popular Computing Weekly, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2R 3LD. He can also be contacted on Prestel mailbox 019983727.

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Tony Bridge's Adventure Corner



Follow the hare

Dear Tony,
Please help! I know it's a little early for you to have tried Hareraiser Prelude, but having recently received my copy for my Commodore 64 (after a month of impatient waiting!), I find all my feelings of eager anticipation suddenly turned to shock and desolation.

On loading you are given a rhyme about the origins of the Hare and told that keys Z,X and the cursor keys are used for movement. These keys do not follow the N.E.S and W that I had assumed they would; it is therefore difficult to record where you've been. Each location is graphically similar, the scene consisting of grass, sky, clouds, sun and trees. The text consists of such gems as: Use your brain; Can you see the wood for the trees; Early bird catches the worm — to give you a few examples. In a few locations a Hare runs from right or left to the centre of the screen and then disappears. No inputs seem to be required.

"So, Tony, please, what on earth am I meant to be doing. Do I have to follow the Hare? Do I make words from the clues? Help! Mrs Gillian Slade, 73 Amethyst Rd, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 3ED.

Hareraiser is the adventure from Haresoft which offers the prize of the golden jewelled Hare of Masquerade, or £30,000. While I haven't yet seen it, let alone tried it, we have had a couple of letters from people less than satisfied with the game.

Masquerade is the book of puzzles that had thousands of hopeful people digging up half of the British Isles in the quest for the Golden Hare, and this game, for several "popular micros", promises the same sort of thing for the more home-bound of us. Gillian is stuck in the first part, the Prelude, and the finale is on sale soon.

"Dear Tony, here is a list of adventures I have completed. If anyone out there needs a clue to any of them, they can write to me, including a SAE, and I'll be happy to help: Colossal Adventure (Level 9): 10/10 — what can I say! Magic Mountain (Phipps): 7/10 — good for beginners, Greedy Gulch (Phipps): 6/10 — beginners only, Pharaoh's Tomb (Phipps again): 9/10 — reasonable, Knight's

Quest (Phipps): 10/10 — not for beginners! Colditz (Phipps): 7/10 — not as difficult as it looks, Velnor's Lair (Quicksilver): 5/10 — I finished this in three days, Quest Hewson: 10/10 — no comment! The Hobbit Melbourne House: 8/10 — Lower marks because I felt the run home with the treasure was a little flat. Espionage Island (Arctic): 8/10 — reasonable.

"Now, can anyone help me with two problems — In Arctic's Golden Apple, how do I get the emeralds from the glass case in the red room, and in Incentive's Mountains of Ket, how do I get past the skull and the dragon?" Karen Tyers 19 Pams Way, West Ewell, Surrey KT19 0HA.

I can help you with these two, Karen: to get the emerald from the glass case in Golden Apple, just try Singing! As for the skull in Ket, you must wear a certain combination of articles to get past — and to avoid the dragon, try Pouring the oil in the warm room.

Douglas Smith writes to me from Glasgow, asking me to suggest adventures for the beginner on the Commodore 64, while Robert Hardie writes from Sydney in Australia, asking for a list of good novices' programs for the BBC. Several American users have also sent pleas for Basic adventures to run on their Timex 2000s.

The first adventure I would recommend to anyone remotely interested in the art, is a version of the original Colossal Adventure. Melbourne House's versions for the BBC, Commodore and Spectrum is as good as any — although Level 9's similarly-named Colossal adventure is available for these and many other micros, and has the advantage of 70 extra locations at the end.

To get an easier introduction to the techniques of adventuring, and have a lot of fun on the way, try Melbourne Houses' masterpiece, The Hobbit. This features many innovative ideas, not the least of which is "animation" — this refers to the habit of the other characters in the adventure to go wandering about getting on with their own lives, while you are struggling with the various problems (just don't come back to me in a couple of months, asking for help in the Goblin's Dungeon).

Graphic adventures are well-liked by many adventurers, but, unfortunately, there are not many for the BBC. Some of the best, though again, not necessarily the easiest, are from Epic Software. You'll find this company at 11 Edendale Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE13 0EW. Castle Frankenstein is actually text-only, boasting 220 locations and 29,000 characters of text — but The Wheel of Fortune, Epic's newest Epic, is text and graphics.

The grand Elf can't leave the good old Beeb without mention of the granddaddy of all BBC adventure-writers, Acornsoft. Games like Philosopher's Quest, Countdown to Doom, Castle of Riddles and Sphinx Adventure have endeared themselves to

countless (almost!) Beeb'ers — and the newest adventure, Kingdom of Hail, seems set to become yet another classic.

While on the subject of BBC adventures, it may be worth looking at a couple of new releases from Micrograf (of 120 Oxford Road, Reading, Berks.), who, with Vampire Castle and Flint's Gold, have a pair of good introductory adventures.

As for the Commodore — there are many adventures available for the machine from the States, including the Infocom series, which are rather state-of-the-art, and thus may prove rather frustrating for the beginner. Companies like DataSoft, Spinnaker and Adventure International all release a lot of software for the Commodore, including adventures of all sorts. The latter software house is the brainchild of Scott Adams, whose name is synonymous with adventure programs — try Pirate Adventure, Adventureland, and The Count as good introductions, leaving some of the others for later.

Finally Basic adventures for the Spectrum — I'm afraid that there are not many! The market, as it stands at the moment, demands fast responses to a variety of input, and that can only be achieved by machine-coded programs. The only two that spring to mind readily are Treasure of Meathos, that I mentioned in Vol 3 No 33, and Velnor's Lair, from Quicksilver. This one is written by Derek Brewster, a well-known personality in the software world. This was his first (I believe) commercial enterprise, largely ignored until he became more famous for programs like Lunar Crabs and Codename MAT.

I'll leave you now with a couple of not-often-mentioned adventures. Brett Marl, from Chester, writes: "Please help me with Ghost Town, from Virgin. In three months, I have still not found the combination to the Safe".

And, from Richard Alexander of London, some hints for Denis Through the Looking Glass, from Applications Software. "To get out of No. 10 [a problem that vexes many people; TB] try this [refer to the list of clues below] 7,7,3,2,14,7,16,12,18,15,9 — and after every 10th move, you should 9. Other hints include 5,19 three times before going 14 out of the 10 — don't 4 the 13 in the 20, and finally, 6 needs his 1,21,8,11!

1 Eyebrows 2 Scuth 3 Hide 4 Kiss 5 Knot 6 Healey 7 North 8 By 9 Drink 10 Window 11 Lawnmower 12 Pot 13 Frog 14 East 15 Flask 16 Look 17 Needs 18 Get 19 Sheet 20 Garden 21 Trimmed

This series of articles is designed for novice and experienced Adventurers alike. Each week Tony Bridge will be looking at different Adventures and advising you on some of the problems and pitfalls you can expect to encounter. So, if you have an Adventure you want reviewed, or if you are stuck in an Adventure and cannot progress any further write to: Tony Bridge, Adventure Corner, Popular Computing Weekly, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2R 3LD.



ZX-81 OWNERS

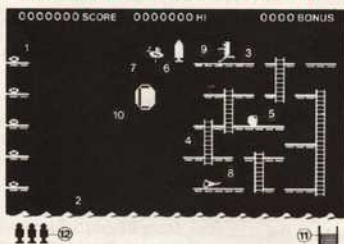
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| 4. Ladders | 8. Leg of Lamb | 12. Men Remaining |

Get rich quick by collecting Diamonds that are simply lying there waiting for you!

Oh... I forgot to mention that there are one or two problems! There is an expanse of Shark infested water between you and the Diamonds and a strange breed of Bubble that seems hell bent on getting you in it! Somehow you must cross it...

You have a Rocket Pac to help you (a Vulture on higher levels) but you must rush around the platforms and ladders collecting cans of fuel (legs of lamb with the Vulture) and cursing that weird Bubble. Once you have enough fuel then it's Chocks Away!

Oh... but don't run out of fuel on the way - otherwise it's SPLASH!

The aim is to collect all the diamonds from the far left hand side of the screen, whilst avoiding the rampant Bubloid. These emerge from the sea and are hell-bent on returning to their watery habitat with you in tow. Sooner or later you are going to end up in the drink - The idea is to make it later!

By belting round the system of platforms and ladders, cleverly avoiding the Bubloid, you collect the fuel cans which appear in random positions, until you consider that your fuel gauge indicates sufficient in the tank. Now you can go and collect your rocket. With the rocket-pack strapped to your back you can fly across the expanse of sea to collect the diamonds... but don't run out of fuel or your rocket-pack will simply disappear and you will wind up in the drink!

There are six stages with six different platform layouts. On stages 1-3 the Bubloid, which floats in front of the platforms with uncanny ease, gets an ever increasing ability to home in on your position, making the task of staying alive more demanding with each stage. On stages 4-6 you once again start with the easiest Bubloid (which is a blessed relief!) but the fuel cans are replaced by legs of lamb which you must collect to feed your vulture, and once it has enough energy (or you think it has!) you must flap across the water on its back to collect the diamonds.

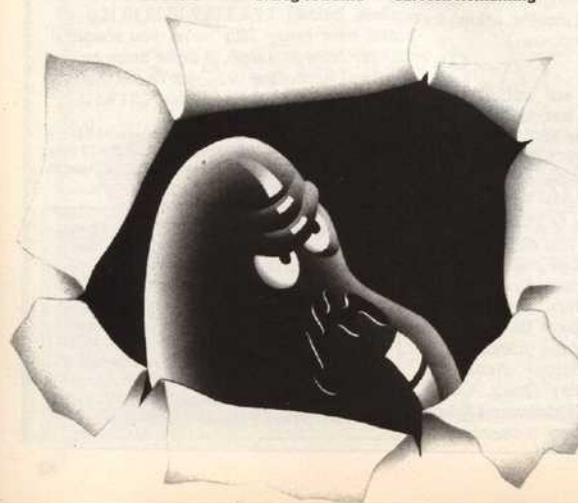
Extra men are awarded for every 10,000 points - but ONLY once you have collected all the diamonds and so completed each particular stage.

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Acoustic coupler

A Bennett of Whitehaven, Cumbria writes:

Q I am seriously thinking of buying a modem, but the snag is our telephone is not very new. The plug is permanently fixed to the wall, and an acoustic coupler would be no good either as the computer is rather a long distance from the phone. Could you please advise me on what to do?

A If you do not have one of the new BT jack plug sockets (which cost about £25), then you will have to use an acoustic coupler. Distance from the telephone is a problem, but only if you were upstairs and the phone was not. Acoustic modems are not as reliable as other types of modem, but they are still very usable. My advice to you is to consult your local BT Sales Engineer for advice on how to proceed. The service will cost you nothing and you are certain of an expert on-the-spot opinion.

Disabled keys

C Wright of Lewton, Suffolk writes:

Q I own a Vic 20 and would like to know how to disable the Run/Stop key. I have heard that Po-keing 37150,2 and using an Input statement will disable the Run/Stop and Restore keys, but that the only way to disable Run/Stop is to program in machine code. Also, what do the symbols < and > stand for? My speech synthesiser pronounces

them as "Power", but I can't understand what they are there for. Just seems a waste of good keyboard space to me.

A In order to disable the Run/Stop key you should Po-ke 788,194. The Po-ke you mention only disables the Restore key. To disable both the Run/Stop and Restore keys you should Po-ke 808,100. The two characters you mention are normally used for cursor control, try experimenting with them when you have a program listed on the screen and you might find out how useful they can be.

Basic learning

P G Rix of Abergavenny, Gwent writes:

Q I have recently purchased a BBC B, for both personal and business use. However, the nearest I have ever been to a computer before this is the other side of a shop window.

Can you suggest any courses that people such as myself (I am a hotelier) could attend, where we could spend a week or so learning the basics (pardon the pun).

A As you are a hotelier can I suggest Butlin's. I know that may seem a little strange, but the course at their Skegness camp was highly recommended by Mr Harding in Vol 3 No 24.

The courses run for a week and details are obtainable from Butlin's at Skegness.

Computer education

Mohamed Inaam Al Sheraz of Kuwait, writes:

Q These days it is commonly heard that computers are in use in schools for educational purposes, especially the BBC computer.

I wish to know how computers and computer-aided learning and teaching can help the students in their normal studies, and what kind of software is used for this purpose?

A The biggest impact that computers have made in the educational field has occurred in the primary schools. There are many reasons that the secondary schools have not made as much of computers in the classrooms, the main one being that they are constrained by the formal requirements of exam syllabuses.

Some teachers see computers as a way of interesting young children in the 'boring chores' of spelling, simple mathematics, and elementary geography. The computer is seen as a way of coping with the wide range of abilities found in a single class. Most of the software for these (and other) purposes has been produced, either by teachers, or by those closely associated with the teaching profession. Virtually all of the primary school software uses coloured graphics as a means of getting the message across and also as an 'interest grabber'.

Compiler answer

A Fearon of Birmingham writes:

Q I own a CBM 64. I am writing an adventure game, but I would like my program to be in machine code rather than slow Commodore Basic. I have heard that a compiler might be the answer, can you confirm this? Also, can you tell me how big a Basic program it can compile, as my program will use nearly all the available memory (34-38K). How could I gain access to the hidden memory which is denied the Basic program programmer? Another question, how can I implement my own graphics in machine code in my adventure?

A A compiler would be the answer, except that as they normally have to reside in

memory when the program runs you might well run short of memory. Also, you would be unable to sell your finished program, because of copyright problems. A compiler will take up between 5-10K of memory and will almost certainly place restrictions on you as to what Basic commands you can use, as well as restricting the facilities of the machine.

Whilst I sympathise with your wish for your program to be superfast, it is true to say that adventure games do not need to be very quick. You do need to respond to an input as fast as possible, I agree, but any random events, or movements can take place while you are waiting for the next Input. Your only other real alternative is to write in machine code, or to use a compiler and look for ways of saving space. One such way would be to use character compression to reduce the amount of memory needed to hold the textual descriptions of locations, etc.

Joystick interface

Paul Stead of Hull writes:

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SPECTRUM 48K, Kempston joystick interface cassette recorder, £500 (all originals) games inc. Pascal Compiler, Hobbit, Atic Attack, Fighter Pilot, Valhalla, Flag £200 ono. Tel: Steve 01 361 0146 (7pm).

SPECTRUM PRINTER. V.g.c. Boxed, manuals, hardly used. £35. Tel: 8425 10 (Greenhith) after 4pm.

SPECTRUM 48K little used immaculate condition. Boxed. V.G.C manuals, leads etc. Perfect working order. Bargain sell £75.00. Tel: Newark (0636) 706326. Post if cannot collect.

SPECTRUM ADD ON's for sale fuller master unit £40.00 Kayde light pen £15.00 kempston interface joystick £15.00 micro drive cartridges £4.00 each alphacom printer £45.00 tel 01-6830963

SPECTRUM 48K with keyboard, fuller master unit and printer with 5 rolls printer paper. Also £100 S/W and three books good condition, £300 o.n.o. Tel Stuart (0977) 792719 after 6 p.m.

WILL Swap my original spectrum

software for Currah micro speech. must be in good condition with manual etc. Please write Gordon Craig 19 Finlow Terrace, Fintry, Dundee DD4 9NQ

SPECTRUM ORIGINALS: J/S Willy, Blue Thunder, trashman, stunters, millionaire all £4.00 Nightlife II Slicker puzzle, Codename Mat, £4.75 Tel: 0495 214185 private sale.

SPECTRUM ORIGINALS: Atic Atac £4 Manic Miner £4 time gate £4 gnasher £1 speclpede £1 (All £12) inc. PP 50p Tel: Southend (0702) 586841

I would like to get in touch with a pen friend to exchange spectrum programs and information. Write to Vincent Brewood, 27 Sembawang Road, Singapore 2677.

SPECTRUM 48K Plus kempston joystick and interface plus software, books, and magazines worth over £150.00 (including ant attack, forest and beyond basic) £200 o.n.o. will sell separately Tel: (0254) 37606.

48K SPECTRUM, ZX Micro drive interface I, ZX Printed, Light pen, printer paper plus £150 of software including flight simulation and checked flag. £300. Tel: — 657 — 4999 after 6pm.

ORIGINAL SPECTRUM Software for sale planetoids £2, spectral invaders £2, dictator £3, battle of Britain £3, VU3D £5, Flight simulation £4, forth £7. Tel: 0865 — 241406 after 4p.m.

FOR SALE Unused spectrum stonechip progammable joystick interface (cost £25) 10 months guarantee unwanted gift £13 Tel: Martin on Bettisfield 523 any weekday after 4.30p.m.

SPECTRUM: Swap espionage island and knights quest (Mine) for any level 9 game or any mysterious adventure (digital fantasia) Phone 0574 — 2274 and ask for Paul.

48K SPECTRUM (Issue B) with manuals Leads etc. (£75 max) and printer (£18 max). Both to be in good working condition write to Asif, 17 Oakfield Rd, Rugby CV22 6AU.

SPECTRUMS Wanted not in working order just PCB for projects good price paid Mr. Seago Tel: 0502 66289.

48K SPECTRUM Brand new. used only once To check if working still in box. All leads, manual etc, with horizons tape (still sealed) any offers £110 Tel: 0362 4497.

SPECTRUM Penpal wanted to exchange hints tips and ideas, can swap software please write to Steven Carrett, 139 Paignton Road, Millbrook, Southampton, Hants SO1 4BD Tel: 0703 787429.

SPECTRUM 48K Interface 1 and microdrive all brand new £200 o.n.o. or will split. Tel: Torm (0742) 388675.

48K SPECTRUM Plus cassette recorder and cover 23 original software titles including the prize, JSW, Trashman, Hobbit. Also book and manuals £200 or swap for CBM64 or electron phone 02367 33142.

48K SPECTRUM Plus cassette recorder, machine code books, manuals over 23 original software titles including JSW, Hobbit, Manic Miner etc Only £200 or swap CBM64 phone 02367 33142.

48K SPECTRUM B/W Television, cassette recorder (WH Smith), joystick and interface Lightpen loads of software packs of mags, books (M code) buyer must collect, 5 Garston Way, Great Barr, Birmingham B43 5JT.

48K SPECTRUM recorder amplifier, printed attaché case kempston joystick books mags. £150 good software little use in good conditions cost £400 £195 o.n.o. Tel Sherborne (0935) 812009 eves.

DRAGON Disc drive and Dos used twice £100 one must collect Telephone 0638 — 385165 of write 39 Moss Rd Wighaw starholide Scotland.
DRAGON 32 + joysticks, light per magazines, games & utilities software, less than a year old £150. Tandy CGP-115, colour, graphics Printer £95 Sell together for £240. Tel: 01 — 360 3553.

For sale

QUICKSHOT JOYSTICK and interface (Spectrum) boxed. Unused. (Won't fit in my case). Bargain £18. Tel: Churston 842209.

FIRST 14 issues Micro User, Acorn Users March to Nov. 1983, First 3 A&B Computing Magazines, Programming BBC Micro — Williams, Basic BBC programming—Cryer & Cryer As new half price. Tel: (0484) 39295.

EVERY ISSUE 'Your Computer' magazine May 1981 to present plus many other mags. Also Dragon software, cheap. Phone Ware (Herts) 68264. Wanted Ikon Ultradrive for Dragon.

T199/4A Home computer. V. good condition plus cassette recorder and leads with five cassette games £80 ono. Tel: 061-861-8835 after 6pm or weekends ask for room L5.

TRS 80 32K L2 with expansion interface monitor and cassette recorder plus lots of software including Mission Impossible, Invasion Force, Pyramid, £295 ono. Write to M. Hurer Brenthurst, Barnet Rd., Arkley, Herts. EN5 3LW.

TEXAS 16K computer complete with TV, all leads, books, games, beginners Basic cassette, etc. Only 4 months old. Phone 01 890 1502 Mr Clark.

DRAGON 32, cassette recorder, £80 Tel: 0494 33950 (eve only).

THREE VIC TAPES issues I, II, III and escape the MLP. Sell £1.50 each or altogether £5.00. Tel: 0908 568765.

2 OF MATRIX printer, 24 colour graphics double size width character. Parnelle or serial, suit most computers. Tel: Harrington 83097.

SHARP PC 1500 with printer/cassette interface + 8K Ram module manual £250. Tel: Dave Crewe. Tel: day — 01 540 8300 ext 3045 Eves 01-866 5309.

COMPLETE ZOOM—Pascal disk, utility for C64 £18 or swap for Oxford Pascal. Ring Mick 01 828 2933 ext 249 day.

OSBOURNE I double density. Masses of extra s/w £25. Tel: 01 485 1488.

TRS 80 model I level II, 48K monitor, tapes dual disc, word processor and other programs. Home business use. May split £480 ono. Tel: 0695 632 989.

SILVER REED interface 4 £85.00. Tel: 01 603 2935.

TWO 48K TRS 80 model I. Twin disc drives £600 each. Tel: 061 205 0516.

TRS 80 I 16K monitor, cables, s/w. £130 ono. Some programs inc: Database £10. Tel: Welwyn Garden City 24591.

JUPITER ACE + forth manual as new £50. Tel: Chatterfield 0426 71997.

CASIO PB100 pocket computer with cassette interface printer. Ram expansion + case. £60. Tel: 01 808 9002.

TRS 80 model 3, level II, 16K cassette £300 ono. Tel: 021 704 9000. Office hrs. Miss Nickieburgh.

ORIC I 48K 5 months old. Only used few times. As new. Inc: 2 programs books + selection of tape s/w £83.00 ono. Tel: Clevedon 0272 87632.

LYNX 48K computer 8 months guarantee + Lynx tuner and N.I.L.U.G. mags + some s/w £150.00. Tel: Shrewsbury 245 671.

LYNX 48K £140 ono. Tel: 01 969 8076.

TEXAS S/W for sale. Video chess + Space Invaders. £10 each. Extended

Basic £50.00. Voice synthesiser £30.00. All new. Tel: 01 992 6548.
SEIKOSHA GP100A printer. Condition as new. Bargain at £120. Tel: 01 935 5832.

SINCLAIR ZX interface 2 Joystick port/ cartridge socket. Not needed as I am not an avid games player! Quick sale only £15 phone (01) 319 1572 after 5pm.

96K LYNX £150.00 ono. All leads 2 manuals. Tel: Shaw 841 996 after 6pm.
48K LYNX complete with Joystick interface + £70 of s/w + demo + 4x C15 cassettes. Lynx Computing book and N.I.L.U.G. membership £130.00. Must collect. Southend (0702) 524958.

ZX PRINTER with 10 rolls of paper £35. Tel: 0625 877496.

LYNX 98K. Some software as new £190. Tel: 0970 828 851.

MAPLIN modern kit with box £50 ono. Rotherham 549235.

CYTRON, DUNGEON builder, Quill, Super chess 3, selection for sale. Originals only. Tel: Shrewton (0960) 620114.

LYNX 48K with MANUAL + lead serial interface pack. Introductory books £99.00. Tel: Coggeshall (Essex) 0376 62630.

ELSTON computer cassette recorder perfect condition. Sell write BBC leads. £20. Can post. 01892 65 75.

SPECTRUM 48K (3 months old) under guarantee + s/w (chequered flag and others) + books worth £30. Mint condition. Sell £10. Tel: 01 223 3816.

SHARP M280K, micro, plenty of s/w games + utilities + books. Excellent condition £190 ono. Tel: 0229 37853.
TEXUS T199/4A 16K cassette interface cable £50. Tel: 01 642 3816.

WANTED

HIGH QUALITY daisy printer ie: Shinwar Daisy step 2000. Cash paid. Tel: 01 986 0668. Eves.

SPECTRUM S/W for swap or sell. All

SWAP TWO QUICKSHOT II joysticks for 2 competition pro joysticks will pay postage write to 7 Turner Road Norwich NR2 4AD.

original games inc: Moonaler, Sabre Wolf, Blue Thunder, Caesar The Cat, Tutankhamun, Scuba Dive, Trashman. Phone for details 041 771 1164.

48K SPECTRUM for around £50. Tel: Bobby on Dunstable 63230.

SWAP 48K SPECTRUM s/w (Atic Atac Oracles Cave, Games Designer) Tape recorder for Atari 800 CV 400 48K. Tel: 061 766 3494.

WANTED SPECTRUM computing cassette/magazines and 2 Armstrong. 1 Chestnut Drive, Holme On-Spalding-Moor, York YO4 4HW.

WANTED ANY RECORDINGS in Basic code will come to some arrangement Tel: John 061 792 1122 after 7pm.

WANTED T1-99/4A software. Spectrums, extended Basic, Terminal emulator etc. For sale T1-99/4A Chess Module £12 also Atari Game Cartridges £8 each Tel: 01-992 6548.

WANTED BBC B1 2 o/s sensible price will be paid for the right machine phone Weybridge 49669 after 4pm.

QUICK! PLEASE SWAP my 48K Spectrum + Spectrum, tape recorders, manuals etc magazines + well over £300 worth of software for your CBM 64 + tape recorder. Phone please please!

WANTED CGL M5 software and hardware will swap Sanyo Sportster for Basic F or Falc also Yamaha CSO1 Synth for 32K Ram or what have you Sean — Kilmore, Connemara, Co. Galway, Ireland.

SWAP £150 of Spectrum software (Hobbit, Ant Attack, Zoom, Manic Miner, Compiler, Maziacs, Speech, C. Flag etc plus Kempston joystick and interface for 16K ZX81 + extras. Phone evenings (0244) 890139.

WANTED 1.2AMP power-pack supplied with ZX-81 printer. And unwanted softwares, for ZX-81 or Spectrum. Preferable business — softwares or mind games. Telephone Tony 01-659 5083. 31 Melbourne Court, Anerley Rd, London S.E.20

WANTED 14" colour portable T.V. or same size colour monitor. Also printer for Spectrum, not Sinclair. Tel: 01 952 9548.

SWAP CBM 64 games, Hobbit, Neoplyse, Mr Wimpy, Hunchback, Siren City, Cosmit Split, For Valhalla and

others, Maria Jones — 63 Downshaw Road, Ashton-upon-Lyme, Lancs.

WANTED: COMPUTERS, equipment, cable, sockets etc. for computer club. Cash offers made. Phone Chris on (0789) 832468 or write: Mr C. Haine 4, Cord Lane, Easenhall, Rugby, Warwickshire CV23 0H2.

SWAP T199/4A, as bought, perfect condition, plus cassette lead, software, and books, for 16K Spectrum, or 16K VIC 20 plus recorder. Preferably Tyne-side area. Phone (0632) 553158 after five. Ask Ian.

SMALL ENGAGED MODEL railway layout some rolling stock + engine to swap for ZX printer. Tel: 310 1376 Woolwich.

SPECTRUM + S/W to swap inc: Pole Position, Match Point — 01 937 1811.

FRUIT MACHINE — electric slot 1P + 10P ex pub. Swap for Spectrum Dragon, Electron or Spectrum + s/w. Must collect — Nantwich nr Crewe — 0270 628502.

WANTED 48K SPECTRUM — extras unnecessary. Tel: 021 742 1446.

48K SPECTRUM WANTED. BBC model: good price paid. Tel: 0305 053408.

OSBOURNE WANTED, preferably model II. Very good condition. Super Brain and also printer — Tel: Mr Laru — 0203 418938 office hours. Kendworth 0926 55064 eves.

SWAP BBC LIGHT pen + s/w for Acornsoft Aviator or sell for £10.00. Tel: S. Patel 43 Wherside, Ashton-under-Lyme, Lancs O16 8NY.

WANTED: ANY PRINTER with dot-addressable graphics and parallel interface for use with TRS-80. Contact Nigel on 0966-33441 after 7pm.

SWAP 48K SPECTRUM + Seikosha MKII Graphics Printer + interface + word processor + portable TV + cassettes + software for Commodore 64 + cassette + software or will sell 30 Brown Cres Sutton in Ashfield Notts.

EXCHANGE, TWO 1/12m scale model electric racing cars for radio control, for CBM 64 s/w. Or sell £25 each. P/ox against disc or printer. Tel: Keith on Scunthorpe (0724) 851132.

WANTED BBC model B micro swap for Vic 20 + £20 of accessories. 01 949 7464.

Diary

Event	Dates	Venue	Admission	Organisers
Electron and BBC Micro User Show	Aug 31-Sept 1 10.00am-6.00pm Sept 2 10.00am-4.00pm	UMIST Manchester	£2.00 adults £1.00 children	Database Publications 061-466 8383
Games Day 84	Sept 1 10.30am-6.00pm Sept 2 10.00am-5.00pm	Royal Horticultural Society's New Hall, Greycoat St, London SW1	£1.25	Games Workshop 01-985 5713
Hampshire Computer Fair	Sept 6 11.00am-3.00pm Sept 7 10.00am-5.00pm	Guildhall, Southampton	Trade — free public — £2.00	Testwood Exhibitions 0703 31957
Walhamsett 84	Sept 8 10.00am-5.00pm	Main Exhibition Hall, Walham Forest Technical College, Forest Rd, London E17	£1.00	London Exhibitions and Promotions 01-554 9039
ZX Microfair	Sept 8 10.00am-6.00pm	Alexandra Palace, London N22	£1.00 adults 50p children (in advance)	ZX Microfairs 01-901 8172
Personal Computer World Show	Sept 19-22 10.00am-7.00pm Sept 23 10.00am-5pm	Olympia 2, Hammersmith Rd, London W6	£3.50	Montbudd Ltd 01-486 1951
Livingston Computer Fair	Oct 6-7 10.00am-5.00pm	Peel House, Ladywell, Livingston, W Lothian	£1.00 adults 50p children	Ibc/W Lothian Computer Club 0506 39048

MEGA-BIX

In *Paranoid Pete*, Pete is paranoid because of his concern for wheat and the way it is so easily decimated by Mega-Wibbles. This is agrarian commitment of the highest level.

Pete looks vaguely like one of those Weetabix characters and his job is to dig in the seed which is falling from the harvester spaceship and protect both it and himself by bashing the roving Mega-Wibbles. There's lots of colour and graphics in the game, but it isn't fundamentally very sophisticated. This is perhaps why Ubik have stressed its appeal to younger players. Simplicity can be a virtue.

If you're five, you may well love the game; if you're 15 you won't be impressed. Technically it's nothing special.



Program Paranoid Pete
Price £5.50
Micro Spectrum
Supplier Ubik
66 Rothwell Road
Gosforth
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 1UA

FOR SCHOOLS

I think, he says sticking his neck out, waiting for it to be chopped off, that *Pilot — Plus/64* is the first appearance of this language on the Commodore 64. In fact, I can't recall having seen another version on any home micro other than the BBC.

Pilot is supposed to be as good a language as Basic for learning with and is particu-



larly suitable for things like tests and other things with a list-like structure.

The booklet you get with the program gives you enough information about the language to enable you to actually do some programming of your own, as opposed to referring you to reference works on the subject.

Although it could be useful for writing things like adventure games, I suspect that mostly this is a package for use in schools rather than for the average punter, hence, partly, the price £26.

Program Pilot-Plus/64
Price £26
Micro Commodore 64
Supplier Sigma Press
5 Alton Road
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5DY

GO WEST

An adventure for adventurers and ZX buffs of long standing is *The Quest for the Holy Joystick*. It's text only and Quilled, but with a nice line in in-jokes and references to the flotsam and jetsam of computer life.

One of the first locations you'll come to is the ZX Computer Fair at Alexandra Palace at which you will find such obscure reference points as 'The Sunshine stand' and 'Tony Bridge' (who he?). Here, too, you will discover one of my favourite bits, 'West there is a very famous adventure' it says. You go west and well... buy it for yourself.

Virtually every adventure

Pick of the week

WIDE VOCABULARY

Around a year ago Psion released, under licence, a version of *Scrabble* for the Spectrum that had a vast vocabulary and had us all amazed and impressed. It's still a 'vital' enough program to be included on the special microdrive deal Sinclair have planned for Christmas.

Now the people who issued the licence, Leisure Genius, have issued the Commodore 64 version of the game. It forms part of a planned range of games based on originals designed by Spears and Waddingtons.

The Commodore version of *Scrabble* adopts the same standards as the Spectrum one. The *Scrabble* board on screen is comparatively small — just big enough for you to read the letters. Up to four can play, one of whom can be the computer. The computer is equipped with 11,000 words which is enough to ensure a reasonable game.

How long the computer spends hunting through its database of words is determined by a skill level set at the beginning of the game. The highest level can take a very long time indeed. As in the Spectrum game, you can see the computer trying out words and checking scores on the screen while you're waiting for it to come to a conclusion.

People always complain if one reviews things by comparing them with something on another machine, so let's just say that *Scrabble* on the Commodore 64 plays a mean game and that any microcomputer can play *Scrabble* is a remarkable thing in itself. As such it's highly recommended to any Commodore owner. Put I can't help thinking it a bit odd that it knows no more words and responds more slowly than the Spectrum (48K instead of 64) version.



Program Scrabble
Price £12.95
Micro Commodore 64
Supplier Leisure Genius
3 Montagu Row
London W1H 1AB

you can think of, including *Denis* and *The Hobbit*, appears at some point in the game and personally I heaved a sigh of relief for a game, particularly an adventure, that does not take itself too seriously. Not only that, but it seems to function perfectly well as an adventure, too. After an hour I was still none the wiser about the plot but quite entertained. Excellent for those who don't like to take adventuring too seriously.

Program The Quest for the Holy Joystick
Price £4.95
Micro Spectrum
Supplier Delta 4 Software
The Shieling
New Road, Swansea
Hants SO3 2PE

SIX-PACK

Hardly a new release — but a new concept perhaps. Beau Jolly has bought up the rights to most of the Imagine catalogue and are issuing the games, along with a couple of Liverwire in packs of four and six.

There's little point in reviewing the games (apart from one unseen one called *B.C. Bill* which is also available separately and can be reviewed as such) but given that the Commodore 64 pack, for example, consists of *Arcadia* (very good) *Pedro* (not so good) *Cosmic Cruiser* (very good) *B.C. Bill* (reviewed sepa-

ately), *Invaders* (very good) and *3D Jumpin Jack* (best Frogger) — it's obvious you're not getting dross.

Therefore the main consideration is the price — it's £14.99 for the six packs and £9.99 for four. That's around £2.50 a game — most of them previously £5.99 or so. So the packs are an excellent idea for those who've just bought their computer and want a range of games to start off with or aunts who want something to buy as a Christmas present, but are not sure what to choose.

Program Commodore 64 Pack
Price £14.99
Micro Commodore 64
Supplier Beau Jolly
19a New Broadway
Ealing
London W5 5AW

BODILY PARTS

Frank N Stein is fun. In fact, although there's really nothing technically astounding about it and neither could it really be said to be original in any way, somehow it does something right and I found myself having many more just one-more-goes than I have had for ages. Since *Jet Set Willy* in fact.

It's a collect and doge game — you collect the bits of Frank N Stein's body, dodge various completely irrelevant and odd objects and wander back and forth. There are various platforms on various levels and you must use a series of springs to bounce from one to another. Frank N Stein's monster's parts have to be collected in the right order and eventually returned to the lab at the top of the screen.

Each screen is different and requires a new strategy: things bounce, wobble and bash you in unexpected ways and figuring out how to collect all the different bodily parts without getting bashed becomes a matter of some judgement and skill. In the top five within two weeks of release, I'd say.

Program Frank N Stein
Price £5.95
Micro Spectrum
Supplier PSS
452 Stoney Stanton Rd
Coventry
CV6 5DG

UNPARTISAN

Ocean have produced the first reasonable *Track and Field* clone I've seen. It can come as no surprise to discover that it's for the Commodore 64.

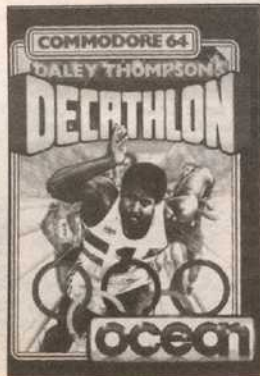
Entitled *Daley Thompson's Decathlon* it is apparently endorsed by your favourite world's greatest athlete and mine, as well as being well... good I suppose. It couldn't be said to require the same skills as the real thing, though.

The game also has an extensive soundtrack, which is partly Yellow Magic Orchestra (hope you're paying royalties, lads) and partly a specially composed Olympic anthem-type thing which is actually pretty good.

Like *Track and Field* you race, throw and jump by a mixture of frantic joystick toggling and the fire button — the former to get up speed, the latter to determine the angle of jump (or throw). You can compete against the computer and another player — if you beat the current record the crowd erupts with entirely unpartisan cheers. (Here the program diverges from real life.)

It's not *Track and Field*, of course — the graphics aren't quite up to it. But it's close and there is a little man who comes out to measure your jump with a tape when appropriate.

Program Daley Thompson's Decathlon
Price £7.90
Micro Commodore 64
Supplier Ocean
6 Central Street
Manchester M2 5NS



XMAS

Every now and then we get something new for the Texas TI99/4A; the temptation to ignore it is strong, though, since unless they come from Texas themselves they are certain to be in Basic and not good compared with the offerings of other micros. This, I hasten to add, is totally Texas's fault for not making the technical details of the machine more accessible.

Sloop's Christmas is based on a well-known cartoon character to which Sceptre Software almost certainly don't have the rights. The game has three screens, to get from one to the other you need a password. The first screen has you helping Sloop's friend to drop in (literally) on his Christmas celebrations, then he has to shoot a turkey and finally drive home safely.

One nice idea is *Musiload*; as the program loads on one tape channel, the other is used to play music — probably like waiting for a plane to take off.

Program Sloop's Christmas
Price £5
Micro Texas TI99/4A
Supplier Gamesware
54 Wycliffe Avenue
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 4RA

BIG DADDY

Quiz programs seem to be what's happening, man, in the wonderful world of computer software — dozens have been

released over the past few months giving hours of fun to all the family (apparently — my family hates them).

What looks like being the big daddy of them all is *Junior Quiz* on the BBC and the Electron. This tape has a machine-code program that formats and organises the questions and 15 files of questions on various subjects from nature spelling.

Aside from the vast number of question available, what also makes this one of the best of its kind is a sensible menu system that lets you choose the style of question you want — multiple choice, yes or no — and add your own questions to the files.

The program's nicely packaged with a clear explanation of what does what and the range of questions should mean it takes quite a while to exhaust.

Program Junior Quiz
Price £10.95
Micro BBC/Eltron
Supplier Kosmon Software
1 Pilgrims Close
Harlington
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU5 6LX

HIGHLIGHTS

Although nothing seems to be able to move *Football Manager* from its position as 'the best football manager game' people still venture into the genre — probably because a lot of programmers also like football.

The Double is for the Commodore 64 and has the immediate virtue of being £2.99. It's far more a management game than *Football Manager* — it doesn't for example, have match highlights graphically displayed. On the other hand there are a large number of options available to you, from changing the formation of the team to spying on your rivals.

It isn't all buying and selling players either; as manager you have to consider things like gas bills, wages and other mundane details. Can you fight your way to the first division without going broke? For a mere £2.99 you can find out.

Program The Double
Price £2.99
Micro Commodore 64
Supplier Senator Software
62 Graham Ave
Brixbourne
Herts

- Atari**
- (1) Bruce Lee (Datasoft)
 - (2) The Hulk (Adventure International)
 - (3) Encounter (Novagen)
 - (4) Popeye (Parker)
 - (5) Planetfall (Infocom)
 - (6) ACE (English)
 - (7) Captain Sticky's Gold (English)
 - (8) Rally Speedway (Adventure International)
 - (9) Slinky (US Gold)
 - (10) Astrochase (Polaris)

*Cartridge, £32K cassette, £32K disc, £48K disc.
(Figures compiled by Calisto Computers, Birmingham 021-632 6458)

- Spectrum**
- (1) Full Throttle (Micromega)
 - (2) Jet Set Willy (Software Projects)
 - (3) Jack and the Beanstalk (Thor)
 - (4) Tornado Low Level (Vortex)
 - (5) Blue Thunder (Foundry Systems)
 - (6) Match Point (Pison)
 - (7) Chaperoned Flag (Real Time)
 - (8) 3D Tank Duel (Beyond)
 - (9) Lords of Midnight (Beyond)
 - (10) Paytron (Beyond)

(Figures compiled by W H Smith and Son, London)

- BBC B**
- (1) Fortress (Paco)
 - (2) Ghoulie (Micro Power)
 - (3) Micro Olympics (Database)
 - (4) Spiffie Command (Superior)
 - (5) Overdrive (Superior)
 - (6) Mr Whiz (Superior)
 - (7) Aviator (Acornsoft)
 - (8) Stock Car (Micro Power)
 - (9) Star Striker (Superior)
 - (10) JCB Digger (Acornsoft)

(Figures compiled by W H Smith and Son, London)

- Books**
- (1) Commodore 64 Programmers reference Guide (Pitman)
 - (2) 80 Programs for Commodore 64 (Pan)
 - (3) Introducing Commodore 64 machine code (Granada)
 - (4) Advanced Programming for BBC (Granada)
 - (5) Commodore Graphics & Sound (Granada)
 - (6) Commodore 64 Disk Systems and Printers (Granada)
 - (7) Data Handling on Commodore Made Easy (Granada)
 - (8) Advanced Machine Code Programming for Commodore 64 (Granada)
 - (9) Make Most of Microdrive (Granada)
 - (10) Beginners Micro Guide-Spectrum (Granada)

(Figures compiled by Websters)

- ZX81**
- (1) Krazy Kong (PSS)
 - (2) Planet Raider (Novas)
 - (3) Alien Rain (CRL)
 - (4) Krypton Ordeal (Novas)
 - (5) Walk the Plank (Novas)
 - (6) Black Crystal (PSS)
 - (7) Flight Simulation (Pison)
 - (8) Asteroids (QuickSilva)
 - (9) Space Raiders (Pison)
 - (10) Football Manager (Addictive Games)

Two titles tied for 8th position
(Figures compiled by Boots/Websters)

- Vic 20**
- (1) Flight 015 (Craig Communications)
 - (2) Sub Hunt (Mastertronic)
 - (3) Snooker (Visions)
 - (4) Golf (Audio Genic)
 - (5) Bewitched (Beau Jolly)
 - (6) Andes Attack (Jamasoft)
 - (7) Undermine (Mastertronic)
 - (8) Phantom Attack (Mastertronic)
 - (9) Crazy Kong (Interceptor)
 - (10) Vegas Jackpot (Mastertronic)

(Figures compiled by Boots/Websters)

- Commodore 64**
- (1) Space Walk (Mastertronic)
 - (2) Scramble (Interceptor)
 - (3) RMX Racers (Mastertronic)
 - (4) Manic Miner (Software Projects)
 - (5) Duck Shoot (Mastertronic)
 - (6) Sub Hunt (Mastertronic)
 - (7) Harvester Prelude (Harvest)
 - (8) Flight Path 737 (Anirog)
 - (9) Chinese Juggler (Ocean)
 - (10) Purple Turtles (QuickSilva)

(Figures compiled by Boots/Websters)

- Dragon 32**
- (1) Pedro (Imagine)
 - (2) Chuckie Egg (AAT)
 - (3) Outburst in the Jungle (Microdeal)
 - (4) Ring of Darkness (Watersoft)
 - (5) Hungry Horace (Melbourne House)
 - (6) Dragonfly 2 (Hewson)
 - (7) Hunchback (Ocean)
 - (8) Dragon Chess (Oasis)
 - (9) Space Shuttle Simulator (Microdeal)
 - (10) Chocolate Factory (Minis)

Two titles tied for 7th position
(Figures compiled by Boots/Websters)

CARTOONS

SIMPLE

Curiously enough, *The Really Easy Guide to Home Computing, Commodore Edition*, is really easy, as well as being a useful guide.

It's a big book designed for kids which uses a variety of little cartoons to take you slowly through the rudiments of Basic programming, pointing out possible sources of error and showing you exactly how to get each of the graphics characters used for the control codes.

The only problem with the book is that, because of its thoroughness, it doesn't actually take you very far — the latter pages go only so far as to deal with printing things on the screen in the right position and using control characters.

Still, it ought to be very useful to the absolute beginner who is in no hurry to understand everything at once.

Book *The Really Easy Guide to Home Computing*
Price £7.95
Micro Commodore 64
Supplier Century Communications
Portland House
12-13 Greek Street
London W1V 5LE

Following close on the heels of Forth as language of the month is Logo, versions of which are cropping up all over the place — a Spectrum edition was recently released to much acclaim.

Although Logo is supposed to be fairly simple language designed for children to learn quickly there are few simple books about it. One problem is the non-standardisation of versions of the language — among micros only the Sinclair one is supposed to meet the official requirements.

Logo Programming, a book from Century, gets round the compatibility problem by presenting problems for both Apple and Research Machines Logo types with notes covering other differences.

Obviously much of this book concerns itself with turtle techniques and drawing pictures but there is more to Logo than this. Other sections of the book describe the use of Logo to manipulate text and figures, using lists and procedures.

Book *Logo Programming*
Price £6.95
Micro General
Supplier Century Publishing
Portland House
12-13 Greek Street
London W1V 5LE

This Week

Program	Type	Micro	Price	Supplier
Zorak the Conqueror	Ad	BBC	£7.95	Icon
Space Station Alpha	Arc	BBC	£7.95	Icon
BBC Basic	Ed	BBC	£14.95	John Wiley
Arts Designer	Ut	BBC	£7.95	Pica
Squash	Ut	BBC	£9.75	Pica
Bruce Lee	Ad	Commodore 64	£14.95	US Gold
Jolly Jack	Ad	Commodore 64	£6.95	Harbour
The Dallas Quest	Ad	Commodore 64	£14.95	US Gold
Zim Zala Rim	Ad	Commodore 64	£9.95	Melbourne House
Double Trouble	Ad	Commodore 64	£6.95	Creative Sparks
Havoc	Arc	Commodore 64	£9.95	Dynavision
Spitfire Ace	Arc	Commodore 64	£9.95	US Gold
Love Bytes	S	Commodore 64	£5.95	Harbour
Nato Commander	S	Commodore 64	£9.95	US Gold
System 1500	S	Commodore 64	£12.95	Craig Communications
Dragonfire	Ad	Spectrum	£7.95	Cheetahsoft
Rogue Ship	Ad	Spectrum	£7.95	Alan Pywell
Sherlock	Ad	Spectrum	£14.95	Melbourne House
The Final Mission	Ad	Spectrum	£5.50	Incentive
Beach Head	Arc	Spectrum	£9.95	US Gold
Bear George	Arc	Spectrum	£6.95	Cheetahsoft
Kokotoni Wilf	Arc	Spectrum	£5.95	Elite
Moonsweeper	Arc	Spectrum	£7.95	Cheetahsoft

Stagecoach	Arc	Spectrum	£6.95	Creative Sparks
System 1500	S	Spectrum	£9.95	Craig Communications
Analysier	Ut	Spectrum	£35.00	Number One
Class List	Ut	Spectrum	£3.00	P Nethercot
Fuel Consumption	Ut	Spectrum	£2.00	P Nethercot
Integrated Bus. Sys.	Ut	Spectrum		Hestacrest
Russian	Ut	Spectrum	£1.00	P Nethercot
School Fund	Ut	Spectrum	£3.00	P Nethercot
Spec. Sound Effect	Ut	Spectrum	£7.95	MTM
Double Trouble	Arc	Spectrum	£6.95	Creative Sparks
Adults Only	S	Vic20	£5.99	Sophisticated Games
Spectrumiser	Ut	ZX81	£6.50	James Paton

Key: Ad — adventure/Arc — arcade/Ed — education/
S — strategy-simulation/Ut — utility

This Week is a new section that covers all the new software coming on to the home micro market each week. All suppliers should send details of their new programs to: This Week, *Popular Computing Weekly*, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2R 3LD.



The right question

It is traditional to think of technological development as something which responds to a need.

Society needs a means of communicating quickly over great distance and the postal system is born. The horses used by the post office get tired, the carriages are slow and so new carriages are developed which are light and fast, yet reliable, but still not fast enough. The postal industry is quick to adopt the new technologies of transportation; cars, motorcycles, aircraft, and so on, but society demands more.

Alexander Bell, Guglielmo Marconi, and a great number of other inspired workers were busy creating answers to this particular problem. Now we are all communicating like mad with our telephones, radios, televisions, and modems.

Have the temerity to mention that you would like to watch the Olympic games live from half-way around the world and someone is only too pleased to stuff up a couple of satellites in geo-stationary orbit to help you out.

This is the traditional view of technological development and, very often, is completely wrong.

It is nonsense to suggest that Orville and Wilbur Wright had any great desire to solve the problem of meeting the world demand for cheap package holidays abroad. They had a huge desire to fly and that was about it. The technologies which they pioneered and the answers they provided were picked up and used to meet a number of diverse needs, to solve a range of problems.

It strikes me that very often the major developments of society follow behind the provision of answers by technologies.

If you are already the owner/user of a home computer then you will probably know exactly what I mean. Did you have a need for the computer before you got your hands on it? Did the computer answer that need? Most people would say no to either one or both of these questions.

We have not yet really started to ask the proper questions of the home computer, but very few people have yet described the thing as a failure. In fact it is my opinion that the home computer is a damn good answer still searching out the right questions.

Some of those questions are beginning to make themselves known now. What do we do for home entertainment when we get fed up with the limitations of the television? What do we do when we want special education at our own pace and convenience? How can we get better control of our home, its various gadgets, the heating systems, the communications systems? What happens when we want expert advice but can't get the attention of (or can't afford or can't understand) the expert?

You can guess what I think the answer is. Can you guess what all the other questions are going to be?

If you can, then you are one of a select band. Not enough people at the moment seem to be devoting themselves to thinking up uses for the micros.

And I must confess I don't know why not. It seems that nobody wants to know because they are all too busy playing games.

What will happen when people begin to get bored with games? **John Cochrane**

Haywire digits

Puzzle No. 122

When Jamie dropped his calculator, the display went haywire. Although it still calculates accurately, the digits that are displayed are shown in a rather curious fashion. For example, here is the result of three multiplications:

$$1 \text{ times } 77 \text{ equals } 4=U$$

$$3 \text{ times } 77 \text{ equals } 4=U$$

$$77 \text{ squared equals } 3=7700$$

Unfortunately, the arrangement of the segments of each digit displayed gives no clue as to the original digit. That is, any segment that is displayed does not necessarily indicate that that particular segment is displayed in the digit — and vice versa.

However, there is one consolation in that the faults are constant and any symbol displayed always represents the same digit whenever it occurs. Also the zero is unaffected and shows as normal.

Can you decipher the displays shown?

Solution to Puzzle No 117

This problem can be worked out in much the same way as it would be done longhand, with pencil and paper. In fact, the reciprocal of 97 is a recurring decimal which repeats every 96 digits, so it would be quite easy to find the millionth decimal place, or any other value above 96, without actually counting them. One solution is: 10 D = 10 20 N = 97 30 PRINT "0."; 40 IF N > D THEN GOTO 300 50 Z = INT (D/N) 60 PRINT Z; 70 D = (D - (Z * N)) * 10 80 GOTO 40 300 D = D * 10 310 PRINT "0."; 320 GOTO 40

Thus the 91st digit is easily counted off and found to be a '1'.

Winner of Puzzle no 117

The winner is Colin Tame, Estcote Drive, East Grinstead, West Sussex, who receives £10.

Rules

The closing date for Puzzle No 122 is September 15.

The Hackers



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MEANWHILE, AT CHEZ PI...



